WORLD SOCCER

MARCH 1970

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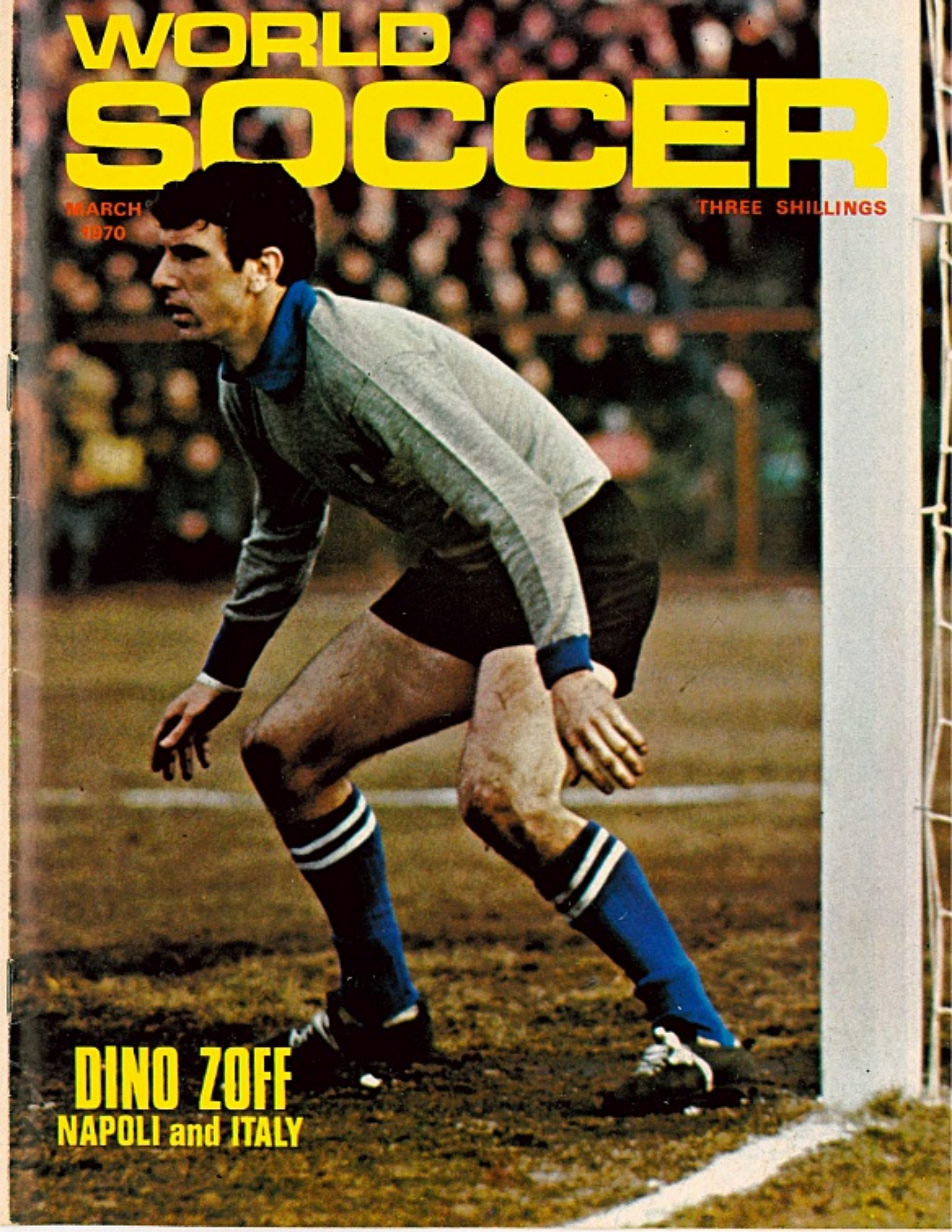

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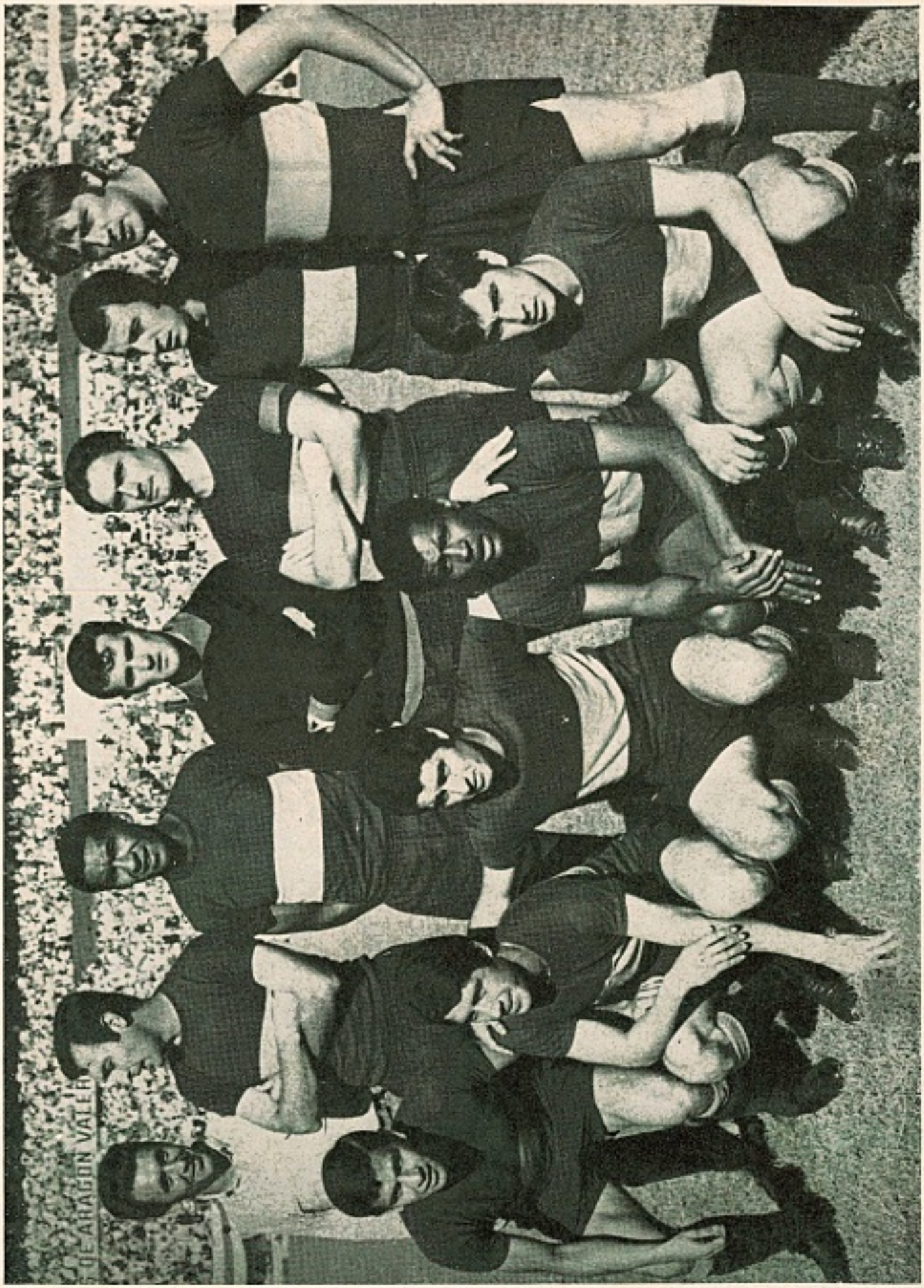

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MARCH

		Page
The Bilbao-Allen Story	*Norman Cutler*	4
Speaking Personally	*Leslie Vernon*	5
World Cup Preview	*Eric Batty*	6
World Diary	*Roger Macdonald*	8
Dateline Diary		10
Looking at Soccer	*Brian Glanville*	12
World Cup Competition		14
Australian News	*Andrew Dettre*	16
Scottish News	*John Stone*	17
European League Review	*Roger Macdonald*	18
Searching the Soccer Scene	*Arthur Rotmil*	20
World Cup Preview	*Eric Batty*	22
South American News	*Eric Weil*	24
News from Spain	*Norman Cutler*	26
World Soccer Scanner		29
Fairs Cup Review	*Arthur Rotmil*	30
Hungarian News	*Leslie Vernon*	31
Italy's Latest Golden Boy	*Philip Evans*	32
Focus on Brazil	*Eric Batty*	34
A Look at the Sixties	*Andrew Dettre*	36
Soccertistics		37
Irish News	*Colin McAlpin*	44
Central American News	*Stellan Danielsson*	45
Billy Bonds Interview	*Gregory Tesser*	46
News from the USA	*Colin Jose*	47

MARCH WORLD SOCCER 1970
VOL. 10 No. 6

WIN A TRIP TO MEXICO

See pages 14/15

Atletico Bilbao Story—*Part I*

by **NORMAN CUTLER**

ALLEN MIRACLE

ATLETICO BILBAO are the most discussed club in Spain today. Their meteoric return to glory . . . headline-catching English manager Ronnie Allen . . . relentless, determined football . . . and a wise, forward-looking president and board have made them feared, admired and, although no one will admit it, an indication of Spain's football set-up of the future.

Since Atletico Bilbao made their momentous decision to engage Ronnie Allen, Barcelona have followed suit and acquired Vic Buckingham . . . Real Mallorca wanted an English manager, but didn't have the courage . . . and Valencia have adopted the manager-team manager-coach method, now so successfully used in England.

Founded in 1898, Atletico Bilbao are the oldest club in Spain (Real Madrid 1902, Barcelona 1899). Newspapers have stressed that the club is beginning an English era. This is undoubtedly true, although hardly new. Early managers were invariably club captains, but the first appointments were Messrs. Harris, Barnes, Gabbutt and Bragge, all brought from England.

The club's most successful period was between 1922-25 and 1929-34 under the management of Englishman Arthur Pentland. It was Pentland who introduced the more rugged style of English football that has been the hallmark of Bilbao football ever since. During his reign, Atletico won the Cup five times and the League three times, including three doubles.

As the years passed, Atletico Bilbao became one of Spain's most powerful and respected clubs . . . and right up to the present day, the greatest cup-fighters the country has ever known. In all, they've made 29 Cup Final appearances, winning 22. During another great era between 1943 and 1958, Atletico gained nine honours, the League twice, the Cup seven times.

Then came the decline. Honours escaped them, standards deteriorated. Slowly they began to slip, eventually relinquishing their place among Spain's "Big Five". Last season (1968-69), with probably the worst league record in their long history, Atletico Bilbao narrowly escaped relegation.

All great clubs fall from grace. It seems normal after a period of triumph. But in the case of Atletico Bilbao the decline was partly due to their traditional policy of signing players from their own province. Since 1915, no player born outside the Province of Vizcaya, known as Spain's natural football nursery, has ever played for Bilbao.

This great tradition brought world fame and admiration. It's one many clubs would like to adopt, but cannot, or dare not, through fear of failure. But to Bilbao, who originally adopted it for economic reasons, it has brought remarkable success.

But now this policy, even though deep-rooted, faces a run-down caused by the turbulent years of 1936-39 (Spain's War of Liberation) and 1939-46 (World War II). And, through the club's lack of organised planning, forgotten in recent years through the eternal struggle for points.

Eighteen months ago, the executive board, under president Julio Egusquiza, became acutely aware of the problem and danger. They stoutly refused to abandon the Vizcaya tradition, instead deciding to stake the club's future upon reorganisation on English club lines.

Before any move could be made, the president was killed in a car accident. Vice-president D. Felix Oraa took over, and in his first public statement as president confirmed that "the plans for reconstruction of our club will go on with more determination than ever." He became the club's "Father of Reconstruction" and immediately looked towards England for the right personality to implement the ambitious changes.

The man he chose was 41-year-old Ronnie Allen, West Bromwich Albion and England international, who, during his four years as manager of Wolverhampton, guided them back to the First Division (1966-67).

Allen arrived in Bilbao in March, a few weeks before the league programme ended. His first impression was depressing, to say the least. The league side included seven internationals, all individually brilliant. But as a team it lacked almost everything. Allen had little to do with the last-minute relegation escape. But the Spanish Cup was to follow . . . and although not yet officially in office, he offered suggestions and advice which the president implemented.

And, as Allen had forecast in a more-than-frank discussion with a hypercritical journalist, Atletico Bilbao won the Cup!

The evening the team returned from Madrid with the Cup, the city went mad. A wild and deliriously happy 100,000 crowded the streets, letting off fireworks, singing and shouting "Ronnie Allen! Ronnie Allen!" who they knew, behind the scenes, had blueprinted the victory.

In July, Allen returned from England after a month's holiday . . . was met by the president . . . and next day started in earnest the rebuilding of this historic club.

First things first. Allen concentrated on the league side. Preparation schedules became ultra tough and hard, but varied and interesting. They trained in the mountains, they trained in the fields . . . and on the beaches (unheard of in Spain). The whole text-book of modern technique and coaching was packed into six short weeks.

Allen inspired confidence and after the first three days of doubt and suspicion, the players lined up 100 per cent or more behind their new manager. No players were acquired, only one transferred.

Tactics? I don't put myself forward as a tactician. But no fixed lines seem to exist in Atletico Bilbao. Each player takes part in a permutation of positions that confuses opponents as Sir Alfred Ramsey's England confused Spain in 1965.

Today Atletico Bilbao are one of the most powerful sides in Spain.

It's been an incredibly rapid transformation . . . a miracle. Ronnie Allen admits it's a miracle . . . and rightly takes the credit for instigating it. But he firmly and sincerely explains: "Success so soon would not have been possible but for the tremendous enthusiasm and unstinted co-operation from the players, the implicit faith of president Oraa and the wonderful public support." And in a significant by-comment said: "We (club and public) have done it alone." Meaning without one iota of support from the local Vasco press.

You are naturally wondering: what is the truth behind the widely-reported Allen-press rumpus which has other managers thinking, the press worrying, and may well have caused a complete revolution in press-football relations in Spain?

The answer, and the construction scheme which has already cost £210,000, makes fascinating reading.

President Oraa and Ronnie Allen take up the story next month.

MOROCCO versus EL SALVADOR final

by LESLIE VERNON

I AM expecting a Morocco v. El Salvador Final in the World Cup! Lack of space prevents me enlarging on this firm forecast, but I would like to put it on record—just in case it really materialises (?) and anyway, that is about the only novel remark one can make concerning the draw.

Every communication media has dealt with the subject so thoroughly, that by now we all know that England had a lousy/marvellous draw, the Brazilians are worried/happy, and the FIFA committee have done a great/terrible job. Perhaps there is still room for me to cross out the alternatives and reflect on the England team manager's curiously predictable reaction to the task ahead. The inscrutable Sir Alf sat in front of the TV cameras watched by approximately 15 million people, and I had the impression that the script was written well before the actual dramatic event. No matter which countries would have been put into Group 3, Ramsey would have said exactly the same non-committal, almost meaningless phrases.

Platitudes

Being a brilliant football psychologist, he realised at once that no trace of anxiety should be shown to the watching population or to the players sitting beside him. But I felt that on this occasion, Ramsey badly overplayed the part he chose for himself so long ago, which by now we accept as genuine. The man sitting behind the mask was quite invisible, and the perfect "identikit" of a national team manager mouthed such incredible platitudes as: "If we are going to win the Cup, we have to play these teams sooner or later."

I know, you know, and even the ex-Ipswich boss knows, that in a Cup competition, strong teams k.o. each other while lesser ones progress. It is an obvious disadvantage to play in a group which does not contain at least one "easy" opponent. It is a tough draw for England and I, for one, would have liked to hear Ramsey say so. They have to play three very difficult matches in a very short space of time under terrible conditions. The noon kick-off against Brazil is particularly disturbing, because the heat and the hard ground should suit the South Americans. It is certain that England must play much better during the group competitions than they did in '66, otherwise they can book an early plane home.

Ensured

In my view, the FIFA and the organising committee have been fair to all concerned with the exception of the Rumanians, who did not deserve to be put into the "weak countries" silver urn. They won their qualifying competition, which included Portugal, Switzerland and Greece, while Sweden only had France and Norway to conquer. Still, it was a "fair do" and the active participation of Miss Canedo ensured that no one could possibly say that the procedures were "fixed", even though the home country got the usual "lucky" breaks.

Four days after the draw, England entertained Holland at Wembley. The Dutchmen clearly outclassed the World Champions, they played smooth, intelligent football, and Cruyff showed us that his reputation as a great player is richly deserved. While the Dutch players used the ball cleverly, keeping it on the floor and supporting each other unselfishly, the England team reverted to their pre-Ramsey rush-and-kick tactics, pumping high balls into the penalty area, hoping that a defender might make a mistake. This was, of course, an unimportant friendly, and it would be foolish to draw weighty conclusions from it. But ... the warning is clearly written on the walls of Wembley. Outdated methods do not produce goals any more, ball-players are needed to give "class" to the team (bring in Ball, Clarke, Marsh and Osgood!) and Bobby Moore is indispensable.

Once again I was surprised to hear Sir Alf's after-match comments: "If you want me to pick teams to win matches, I can do so." he said. What does that mean? Surely not that he deliberately selected an eleven which would not be able to beat Holland at home? If that was his intention, why the desperate and illogical substitutions in the second half. What he really wanted to say was: "This is an experimental period and this particular formation did not click, so we have to look for players who will fit the bill." This sort of explanation would have been much more acceptable to the press, and to the public who paid a lot of money to see a team which "was not picked to win". If this article reads like the start of a "bring back Winterbottom" crusade, I am sorry, because I do admire the current England team manager, but some well-intentioned criticism could be helpful. To redress the balance, I have some misgivings about the activities of a certain Joao Saldanha as well. The Brazilian team manager was less than charitable about European football when he visited our continent, and his attitude of a "tooth for a tooth" does not put him above suspicion either. Now I hear that this erudite ex-TV commentator is making overtures to the Mexican people, wooing them to support his team against the Europeans. He told reporters in Mexico, that he does not hold out much hope for the future of the Jules Rimet Cup. "The Finals will develop into a brawl if we are not vigilant, and the European team with the best 'boxers and wrestlers' will win it." According to Di Stefano, the country with the best doctors will grab the trophy. Pelé said that the refereeing will be the decisive factor.' Wrestlers, altitudes, doctors, referees? I still think and hope fervently, that the best football team will triumph!

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MEXICO

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SIMEONOV

BEFORE the second world war Bulgarian football was almost a nonentity and this apparent failure to adjust themselves to, or gain a liking for, football remained until they began to play in Western Europe in the middle 1950's. When they did come away from home and show the rest of the World what they could do they were not the kind of side to impress the hard-bitten Fleet Street expert.

For one thing they weren't hard or tough enough, why *they hardly ever tackled for the ball*. Yet I personally recall with considerable pleasure one of my earliest opportunities to see Bulgarians play. When they came to Wembley to play in the Qualifying Round of the Olympic Games soccer tournament in Melbourne, 1956 it is true they only met a Great Britain Amateur XI. But it was not the score which impressed me but their style and class, their cultured attempts to play real football. Britain's amateurs were eliminated and later invited to Australia to fill a gap left when someone withdrew but it was not the fact that Bulgaria beat Great Britain but more their play which I recall. Indeed without looking it up I cannot remember the Wembley score but I will never forget the first impression of Ivan Kolev, Stefan Bojkov and Panayot Panayotov.

Kolev was a miniature of Puskas who we had the pleasure of seeing three years earlier and Bojkev was a mini-Bozsik and Panayotov a mini-Hidegkuti. In fact from goalkeeper to outside left; in everything they did or attempted, the Bulgarians were clearly following the Hungarian style—even down to the same formation and successfully seeking the same skills as the key men in the Magyar squad. Of course, as I recall it was all a little slower, lacking that extra touch of class and, if not an identical twin of the 1953 Hungarians then positively a cousin.

Since then of course the Bulgarians have improved with experience; learned to work harder at their game and become more . . . dare we say it? . . more professional in their play and in approach. In fact, it might well be, indeed I am prepared to accept an argument that they have learned to play the West European game, suitably adapted to the Balkan temperament and love of skill and done a better job than the big boys in Budapest.

Qualifying for the final stages of a World Cup in 1962, after a play-off with France the Bulgarians got through to the last 16 in 1966 and 1970. At this point we can argue that with the Hungarians eliminated from the Mundial in Mexico, Bulgaria has overtaken the Hungarian game. In some respects this is doubtful but what is clear is the fact that the Bulgarians make their talents pay while the Hungarians, in recent years, have promised so much but achieved so little.

'goalkeepers can prevent matches being lost'

It will of course, be remembered that in the Olympic Games of 1968 Bulgaria reached the final where they lost to Hungary in a match ruined by bad tempers, nerves and panic-stricken refereeing. But it is true certainly that the level of competition is considerably lower in the Olympics than it is in the World Cup, when the big boys come in and the boots and fists fly quite purposefully. Even so, the Bulgars have learned to *play the game* not as the old English adage means it but its more brutal, modern context. They have learned to accept kicks . . . and give a few back. Unfortunately of course, this stiffening, their new determination or their ability to mix it with the most professional of the professionals has been achieved at the expense of class and skill. But this is no less true of England, Scotland, Russia and a few more who will be in Mexico in June.

Quarter finalists

This time the Bularians are possible quarter finalists though I personally feel that both West Germany and Peru will get the better of them, they have a great deal of talent; quite a tightly knit defence and an outstanding goalkeeper in Simeon Simeonov. On their own, goalkeepers have never been known to win games but there are more than a handful of 'keepers about who can prevent games being lost and on this list Simeonov figures high amongst his contempories.

Taking the ultimate responsibility for Bulgaria's current World Cup campaign is the Stefan Bojkov referred to earlier who as a right half for CDNA (now CSKA) but still the team of the Army, won 53 caps. A veterinary before he quit playing he is now Dr. Bojkov and served his apprenticeship as a manager-coach with the Olympics squad. Doubtless Dr. Bojkov would prefer to wrap up an attractive package containing all the good things in the game—the things that would rekindle the dwindling interest of fans all over the

GEORGI POPOV (Bulgaria).

World, but as we all know nice guys, and artists all get murdered when they step onto the pitch to meet the hard, disciplined teams baited by big cash prizes. So Dr. Bojkov has to compromise and perhaps this helps to explain why I can't really see Bulgaria going beyond the quarter finals, even if they get that far at the expense of Peru. In 1969 the Bulgarian's performances have not exactly been scintillating, their record for this period being: Played 7, Won 3, Drawn 2, Lost 2.

On the debit side was an extremely poor showing at home to Luxembourg from which two World Cup points were finally salvaged (2-1); a 0-3 defeat in Poland that could and maybe should have sent the Poles to Mexico (via a play-off) and a 0-3 defeat in Morocco only a few weeks ago. Against Morocco the Bulgarians could justifiably plead unusual circumstances for three days before they had been in Valencia beating the Spanish Division I side by 5-1. Hanging on in Spain too long, the party then made the long haul to Morocco by coach and sea arriving at their hotel only at 4 a.m. on the morning of match day. Clearly this is no way to prepare for any kind of game, but they had no excuse to offer when they went down against Lubanski & Co., in Poland.

On the credit side the Bulgarians earned a goal-less draw against Italy in Turin and also drew 1-1 away to Holland (who played without Cruyff and Keizer) who as everyone now knows, make a big difference to the Dutch side.

The draw with Italy was one of their most recent experiences against one of the stronger (physically and in other ways too) sides though they also lost at home (0-1) when they entertained West Germany. On the other hand when they last visited Wembley at the end of 1968, the Bulgars

MEXICO 70 **BULGARIA by Eric Batty**

IS OUTSTANDING

made quite an impression with Simeonov performing like three men; the defence standing up pretty well, and if Dimiter Yakimov never seemed to put himself out much . . . after all it was only a friendly. Georgi Asparoukhov ghosted past big Jack Charlton and another England defender and without a colleague in the England half to help him in any way, slipped the ball into the goal. Of course the Bulgarians played defensively and seldom troubled the England rearguard and as the England manager pointed out later, Bobby Charlton could have scored seven on his own!

Sure Charlton could have . . . but after all it was Simeonov's job to stop the ball from crossing the Bulgarian line . . . and if the reverse can be said of Charlton there is no doubt that Simeonov won that little battle by a very wide margin and the aid of a post.

Team-work

The stars in the present squad—if one is permitted to use such a term in these days of over-emphasised team-work and combined play are Simeonov the goalkeeper, Ivan Dimitrov the stopper and three who line up in attack—Dimiter Yakimov, Georgi Asparoukhov and Peter Jekov.

One might also mention briefly in passing right back Alexander Shalamanov, the former national slalom ski-ing champion who impressed in 1966 but has been held back almost continuously since then by injuries.

Simeonov has already been mentioned extensively. Suffice to say now that he is really good (plays for GSK Slavia) and at 23 has 25 caps. Ivan Dimitrov of the newly promoted Akademik is the oldest and most capped player in the side with 62 honours and being 33 years old. Big and inevitably good in the air, Dimitrov is the organiser of the rearguard while his younger and more sprightly *twin* Dobromir Jetchev of Levski does more of the running and covering. Dimitrov, Jetchev and Simeonov carry most of the responsibility for Bulgaria's success or failure in Mexico.

But if the defence has to hold out and continue to run and cover up under the stresses experienced when playing at altitude it is the Yakimov, Jekov, Asparoukhov trio who are going to win matches if there are any to be won. Dimiter Yakimov plays for CSKA and at 28 is a veteran of 53 internationals. In the 1966 series he outshone Pele and Garrincha in the Bulgaria-Brazil match in Liverpool doing so by a considerable margin. Intelligent, skilful and a purveyor of golden balls when at his best, he must get through a great deal of work to ensure that the "cannons", Asparoukhov and Jekov get plenty of ammunition.

Georgi Asparoukhov is big, elegant and a real favourite with the fans of Levski, still the most popular club in Sofia. Twenty-six years old and with 42 caps he took a big reputation to the 1966 World Cup and did little to justify his reputation while he was there. To be fair he was injured at the time and once the series was over he went immediately to Vienna for an operation. As England defenders will remember he bears watching, and this will be underlined in the minds of the defenders who faced him at Wembley in 1968. The way he slipped elegantly past two defenders and persuaded the 'keeper out to meet him was a golden moment . . . though in a competitive match he would probably never have been given the chance to shine. At the big-business level Asparoukhov would have been chopped down on the half way line and we would never have seen his Wembley goal.

Asparoukhov's companion in attack is Peter Jekov of CSKA, Sofia, the man who scored more goals than anyone else in Europe during the 1968-69 season in which he hit 36 league goals to win a trophy from Adidas. Big and bustling it might well be that Jekov will cause opposing defenders more trouble than the elegantly skilful Asparoukhov. Certainly he is more like a blunderbuss than any delicate alpine flower. Quick, and willing, Jekov chases everything and using everything, including his elbows, to great effect and when he connects he really shoots. Up the middle Jekov is certainly the perfect foil to Asparoukhov and the third front player Dinko Dermendjiev on the right wing drops back from time to time and knows just the right kind of pass to deliver to either of them.

Apart from the necessary motivation—provided quite easily by a handful of US dollars, greenbacks I think is the correct expression, to spend on the way home—and given a little luck which every champion must get they have an even chance of reaching the semi finals. This would only occur if everyone clicks at the right time and if the semi final is their absolute limit. There is another factor one must weigh. At home and in the right mood the Bulgarians could be a match for anyone and this is more or less still true of them anywhere in Western Europe. But the further they go from Sofia the less sure they seem to be of themselves.

With this known inability to travel well and West Germany a known force and the talents of the Peruvian squad already demonstrated against Argentina it seems more realistic to set a quarter final place as the Bulgarians limit, but with just a dash of luck and with everyone in the right mood they could go to the last four.

Probable party

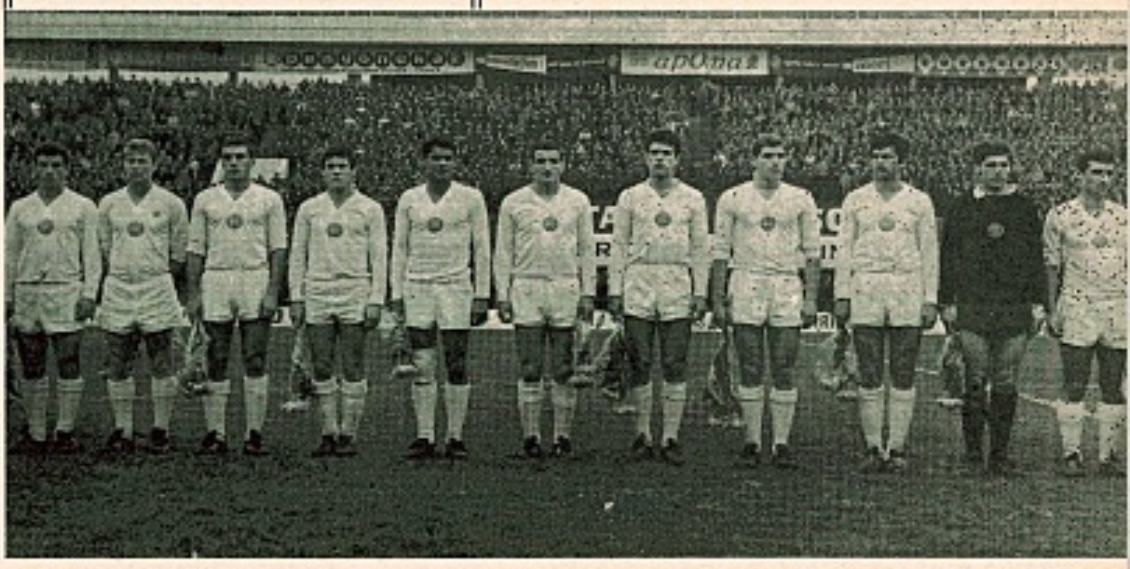
Goalkeepers: Simeon Simeonov (GSK Slavia) and Jordan Filipov (CSKA).

Defenders: Alexander Shalamanov (GSK Slavia), Boris Gaganelov (CSKA), Dodromir Jetchev (Levski), Ivan Dimitrov (Akademik), Ivan Zafirov (CSKA).

Midfield: Dimiter Penev (CSKA), Dimiter Yakimov (CSKA), Christo Bonev (Lokomotive Plovdiv), Asparuch Nikodimov (CSKA) and Todor Kolev (GSK Slavia).

Forwards: Dinko Dermendjiev (Trakia Plovdiv), Peter Jekov (CSKA), Georgi Asparoukhov (Levski), Georgi Popov (Trakia Plovdiv) and Vasil Mitkov (Levski).

Left to right: Mitkov, Kotkov, Kolev T., Dermen diev, Schalamanov, Penev, Jetchev, Bonev, Asparoukhov, Simeonov, Gaganelov (Capt.) (EB)



WORLD DIARY

A FEW days in the life of Victor Buckingham, age 52, professional football manager Barcelona, physical peculiarities none, distinguished features plenty . . . are like a whistle-stop tour by a presidential candidate. Morning: supervise training at Barcelona football club. Noon: fly to London and visit family. Late afternoon: fly to Amsterdam to see Ajax play Napoli in European Fairs Cup. Plane diverted to Brussels, fog. Early evening: depart Brussels for Amsterdam. Evening: arrive Amsterdam in time to see second half and extra half hour. Night: fly to London. Morning: sleep while wife cancels appointment with Sir Alf Ramsey. Afternoon: interviews. Morning: fly London to Barcelona. Afternoon: supervise training.

That would leave the average businessman with an ulcer, travel sickness and an empty bottle of Alka Selzer—but then Vic Buckingham is no average businessman. He is the supreme professional, able to sell himself, in the best sense of the word; sell his profession and sell his club.

At the moment, Vick Buckingham has his eyes on Johann Cruyff, probably the best centre-forward in Europe, the jewel of Dutch football. Plenty of clubs want Cruyff, and some of them have more money than Barcelona; but none of them has Buckingham's glib powers of persuasion, or easy plausibility.

Ajax, almost running into the red in their efforts to keep Cruyff, have finally come to the conclusion that the task is hopeless. Especially as Cruyff has such enormous influence within the Ajax directorate, that he has acquired the power practically to negotiate his own transfer on his own terms —for where he agrees to go, he goes with at least 15 per cent of the fee. Providing it is out of Holland, Ajax do not care—for they know that the fee will be the largest their *enfant terrible* can extract, because Cruyff the *entrepeneur* is almost as talented as Cruyff the footballer.

ANCESTRY

We are in New Malden, in the tastefully decorated sitting-room of the tastefully dressed Mr. Buckingham, when Cruyff's name crops up. "We will, I think, be allowed one European player in Spanish football next season," he explains. "And in addition a player with Spanish ancestry, usually from South America. But for the moment it's the European I'm interested in, and if the ban on foreigners is lifted I'd be very pleased to get Johann Cruyff on my playing staff.

"Johann was a little junior when I first went to Holland in 1959, and when I went back he was a matured player, getting to the age of 17. I played him in his first League match for Ajax. He did very well as a youngster, but I haven't really seen much of him since that date. I've seen him the odd time on television and read a lot about him, but the Fairs Cup-tie between Ajax and Napoli was the first live view I'd had of him for years. I was very pleased with his performance.

"But any talk of transfers is a bit premature, for Cruyff is contracted to Ajax until 1971 and the ban on foreigners in Spain is still on at present. We're looking to the future, and I feel we have a first-class chance of getting him. I'm sure he'd be happy to join me here at Barcelona, for better the devil you know than the devil you don't. There'll be other clubs after him of course, possibly Real Madrid—they are always a tremendous magnet for top players —but I think we could compete successfully for his signature."

Mr. Buckingham would not be drawn, on the record at least, on the subject of fees, but a figure of £120,000 has been freely mentioned by both clubs. On the one hand, Raimondo Saporta of Real Madrid is seen at the Ajax match talking to Ajax officials. On the other, Vick Buckingham leaves the ground with Cruyff and goes home with him in his car. If you pays your money, you gets your choice. . . .

CRITICISM

Barcelona need Cruyff if their recent form is anything to go by—a 3-2 home defeat by a club below them, Sabadell, pushing them down to eighth place, eight points behind the leaders. And there's been criticism of Buckingham's handling of training, because he's been making his players train on Mondays, traditionally a rest day in Spain. Buckingham's explanation would not, I feel, impress a physiotherapist:

"The Press make a song and dance about this, but the players like it. It's what I call active therapy or relaxing therapy. After a match when you've got bumps and bruises you want to run them out, and the players understand once you've explained what you're trying to do. There's been very few complaints really, but then I've got some very fine players . . . very fine men.

"Foreign players are disciplined to the chap they call Mister — a trainer here is always 'Mister'. They respect Mister if Mister is the type to be respected.

"I have total control at Barcelona. I get on with the job, and the directors don't interfere. I have full authority, which I delegate how I want to. Even when directors travel with the time, I have a strange idea in that I make a captain truly a captain. He does the rooming list at hotels for everybody, organises players to attend meals, and makes them be at places on time. My left-back, Eladio, has measured up to this superbly, and everybody soon got over their astonishment when I allocated a player to make up the rooming list. Eladio fits the job perfectly. I think a captain should be a captain in that way—these little things give them a certain prestige within the club. One must delegate authority with so many things to do.

"All foreign jobs are difficult, especially this set up at Barcelona. I control 330 players apart from my full professional squad of 25. I've got two other *league* teams that are playing in the second and third divisions, all of whom are effectively Barcelona players. I like to keep an eye on all these, and that's why I took Ted Drake out to Spain with me. He's doing a good job looking after what we call the *infantiles*, that's the little boys, 12 years of age, up to the *juveniles*, our youth age, about 18. Ted's doing a fine job. He's enjoying himself, everybody likes him, and he's well worth any expense for the club.

"There seems to be a strong movement in Spain for what I migh call cold-country football. They like English coaches here. In fact Ladislav Kubala, who was a truly wonderful player for Barcelona a few years ago, came into see me recently. He's now the Sir Alf Ramsey of Spanish football—running the national side. Well he came into our training ground and asked if he could join in our session. I said you're a little old, and he laughed, but he did join in. Kubala said this is what I want in Spanish football . . . we've got to be a little harder, more direct; so you see not everyone criticises my methods. I think it's quite possible both from a coaching and from a playing point of view Spain would be happy to get a few cold-country players and managers into their football.

"Training a club is essentially a personal matter. Generally we don't ask advice of each other on how to run a team. We've all got our own ideas, and we must put these ideas into practice. In any case, in Spain, there is only one other English manager, Ronnie Allen, and he's too far away. All we've managed to do so far is to fix up a golf match, for we're both keen golfers.

RESPONDED

"But Ronnie's doing a great job with Atletico Bilbao. He's very popular indeed, and the players have responded magnificently to him. I believe Bilbao have a very good chance indeed of winning the Spanish championship.

"We played Bilbao recently and got a draw, one-all. The Press said beforehand it was a case of the lions playing against the lambs—we were the lambs, of course. But we thoroughly deserved the draw, and naturally afterwards I had to hold a Press conference. I built things up for Ronnie, naturally . . . one would do, and I would for myself—I said it was a great match, that Bilbao were fit and strong, and that against such a good side we were happy to get a draw.

"Anyway, when it was over, I went down to the Bilbao dressing-rooms to see Ronnie, who was holding his own Press conference, and lo and behold when I arrived, Ronnie—he speaks Spanish of course—was telling the reporters that this was the worst game Bilbao had played all season! I thought, Ronnie, don't say things like that, when he saw me coming and said quickly, 'But the Barcelona defence is the best we've played against.' That was Ronnie. . . ."

BUCKINGHAM'S TOP SIXTEEN

BUSTILLO, Miguel Angel Lafoz: forward. Born 9.9.1946 at Zaragoza. Joined Barcelona in April, 1969. Previously with Mahon, Aragon and Real Zaragoza. Full international.

ELADIO, Silvestre Graells: full-back. Born 18.11.1940 at Sabadell, Barcelona.

All in a day's work...

ROGER MACDONALD

Joined Barcelona December, 1962. Previously with nursery club, CD Condal. Full international.

FRANCH, Jose Xargay: defender. Born 1.8.1943 at Santa Cristina de Aro, Gerona. Joined Barcelona July, 1968. Previously with Badalona FC.

FUSTE, Jose Maria Blanch: midfield player. Born 15.4.1941 at Linola, Lerida. Joined professional squad March, 1957, from Barcelona Juniors. Full international.

GALLEGO, Francisco Fernandez Rodríguez: defender. Born 3.3.1944 at Puerto Real, near Cadiz. Joined Barcelona June, 1965. Previously with Seville. Full international.

PALAU, Jose Busquet: forward. Born 24.9.1943 at La Llacuna, Barcelona. Joined Barcelona August, 1968. Previously with Sabadell.

PELLICER, Carlos Vazquez: forward. Born 12.5.1944 at Corunna. Joined Barcelona July, 1967. Previously with CD Coruna. Youth international.

PUJOL, Luis Codina: forward. Born at Castvell y Vilar, Barcelona, date unknown. Joined Barcelona April, 1969. Previously with Sabadell. Amateur international and under-23 international.

RAMONI, Ramon Diaz Cruz: midfield player. Born Cadiz, date unknown. Joined Barcelona summer 1969. Previously with Imperio Ceuta Juvenil, Granada.

REINA, Miguel Santos: goalkeeper. Born 21.1.1946 at Cordoba. Joined Barcelona January, 1966. Previously with Cordoba. Youth international.

REXACH, Carlos Cerde: forward. Born 13.1.1947 at Barcelona. Product of youth side. Full international.

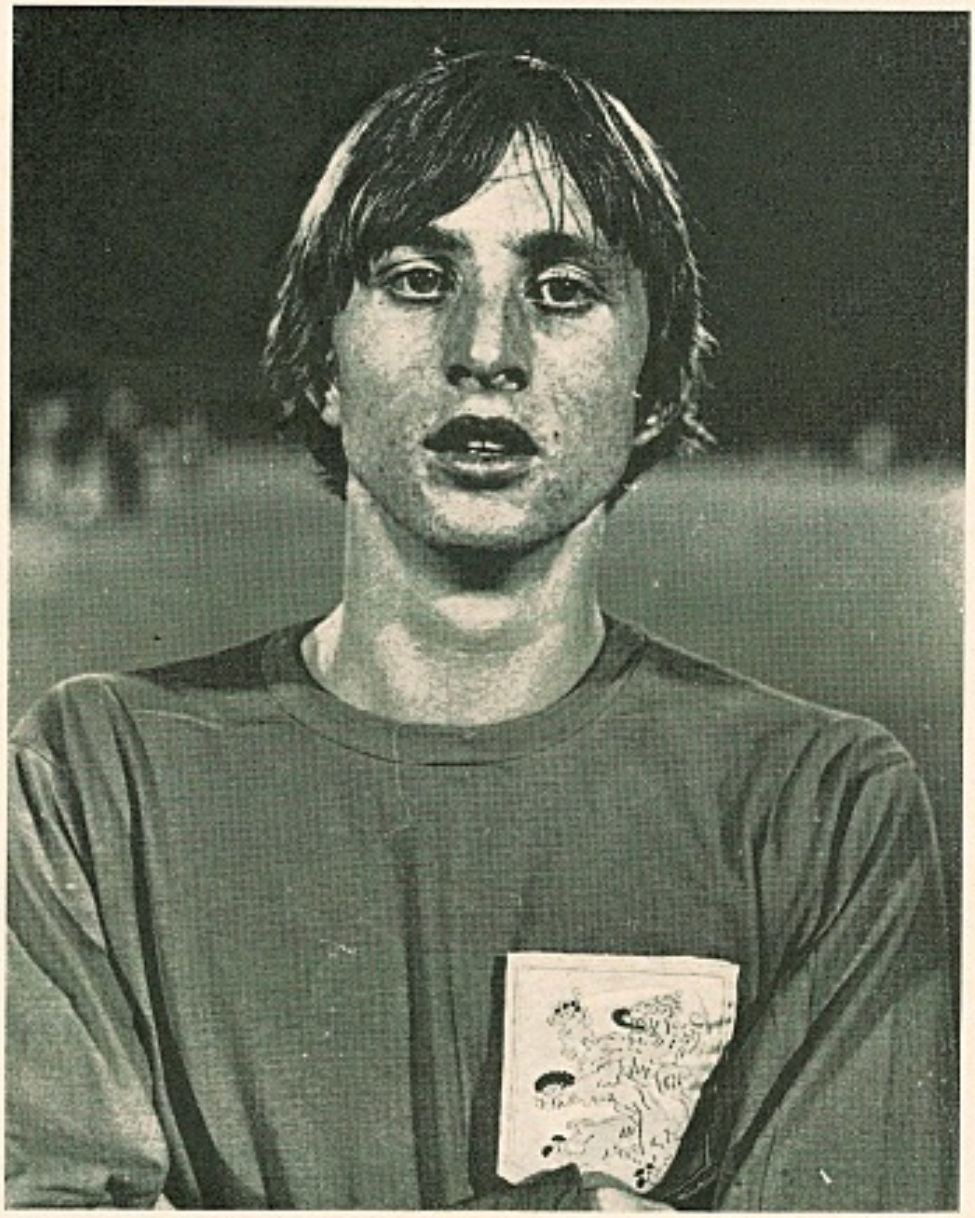
RIFE, Joquin Climent: forward. Born 4.2.1942 at Barcelona. Joined Barcelona July, 1962, from Barcelona supporters' amateur football club. Full international.

SANDURNI, Salvador Urpi: goalkeeper. Born 3.4.1941 at Arbos del Panades, Tarragona. 6ft. 2in. Joined Barcelona November, 1967. Previously with Barcelona Juniors. Full international.

TORRES, Antonio Garcia: full-back. Born 29.7.1943 in Balaguer, Lerida. Joined Barcelona July, 1959, from juniors. Full international.

ZABALZA, Pedro Maria Inda: Born 13.4.1944, Pamplona. Joined Barcelona July, 1967. Previously with Osasuna. Full international.

ZALDUA, Jose Antonio Urdanavia: forward. Born 15.12.41 at Elizondo, Navarra. Joined Barcelona July, 1961. Previously with Real Valladolid. Full international.



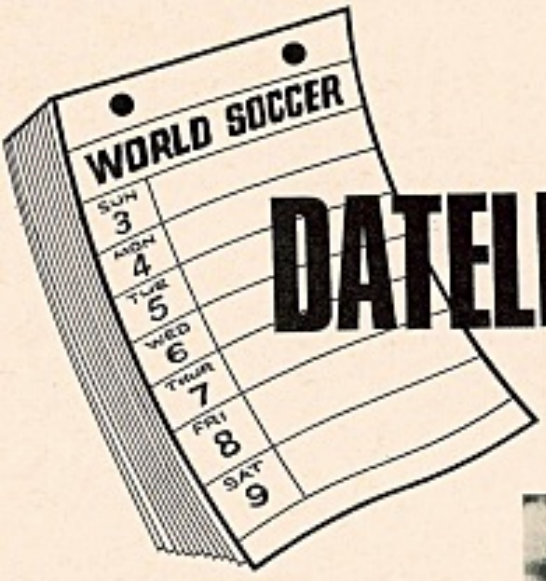
JOHAN CRUYFF. (LPA)

Severe sentences for two former stars convicted of dangerous driving: at Alicante in Spain the Barcelona and Spanish international goalkeeper, Antonio Ramallets, has been sent to jail for eight months following a road accident last May. Ramallets' car collided with an oncoming vehicle on the road between Alicante and Elche, and the driver of the other car died in hospital. Ramallets was banned from driving for 18 months and ordered to pay nearly £3,000 in compensation.

Meanwhile in Rio de Janeiro Manuel Dos Santos, better known as Brazil's World Cup winger Garrincha, was found guilty of causing the death of his mother-in-law in a road accident eight months ago. Garrincha received a two-year suspended sentence and is required to report to the court every six months. But there are signs that Garrincha won't stay in Brazil. He arrived in Rome a week after the hearing, accompanied by Brazilian singer Elsa Soares, who has been associated with him now for several years. Garrincha said he was looking for a job and would like to sign a contract with Juventus. "I like that team," he said. "I almost joined them in 1963, but the deal fell through, much to my regret.

"I may be 37, but I am still fit to play. In six months at Flamengo I have scored 14 goals. I want to play in Europe, because I have not been happy in Brazil."

Garrincha, though, is deluding himself that Juventus will want him. A spokesman for the club said: "Garrincha? Is he still playing. We all thought he'd retired years ago. Even if the ban on foreigners is lifted, which is unlikely, I can't imagine us signing any player over 25."



DATELINE DIARY

JANUARY 7

WEST BERLIN: Hertha BSC clinched a 2-1 Fairs Cup victory over Vitoria Setubal when they won the second leg 1-0 here tonight. Half-time: 0-0. Substitute Steffenhagen was the scorer.

JANUARY 10

ALICANTE: A court here has sentenced former Barcelona and Spain goalkeeper Antonio Ramallets to eight months jail for causing death by careless driving. On May 11 last year Ramallet's car was in collision with another vehicle on the road between Alicaten and Elche. The driver of the other car was killed.

JANUARY 13

BUCHAREST: Kilmarnock were knocked out of the Fairs Cup here today when they lost 2-0 to Dinano Bacau of Rumania in the third round. Dinamo led 1-0 at the interval. Ene Daniel scored both goals.

TEL AVIV: Rumania's Olympic team beat an Israeli World Cup selection 1-0 here today in the first of a series of matches planned to prepare Israel's squad for the World Cup finals.

JANUARY 14

BARCELONA: Italian club Inter Milan beat Barcelona 2-1 here tonight in their Fairs Cup tie. Milan led 2-1 at half-time. Bonisegna and Bertini scored for Inter; Fuste for Barcelona.

JANUARY 18

TURIN: Juventus today equalled the Italian first division record of winning eight championship games in a row. Their 3-0 win over Verona brought their current winning run equal to the record set by Inter Milan (under their old name of Ambrosiana) in the 1939-40 season. Juventus began the present season in the doldrums with four successive defeats. Then last November 16 they drew with league leaders Cagliari 1-1 and since then have neither lost nor drawn.

Holland versus Israel . . . Brokamp scores the only goal of the match, Vissomer is the Israel goalkeeper. (UPI)

ROME: Ace marksman Luigi Riva scored both goals in Cagliari's 2-1 away victory over Vicenza to keep the Sardinian team three points clear at the top of the Italian first division.

JANUARY 19

RIO DE JANEIRO: Angelo Niculescu, Rumania's national trainer, overlooked holders England and former champions Brazil here today to name Czechoslovakia as his team's most dangerous group three rival in the World Cup finals. He was speaking soon after he arrived here with the Rumanian team for a series of friendly games. He said Czechoslovakia had two qualities he considered essential for a great team: "Artistic football, with good physical training."

JANUARY 22

ZURICH: FIFA is to discuss the possible creation of an Inter-Continental Cup competition between champion clubs from six areas of the world, FIFA said today. The proposal will be discussed by FIFA's 37th Congress meeting on June 23 in Mexico City. The Cup would be an official competition in which the six champion clubs from Africa, Northern and Central America and the Caribbean, South America, Asia, Europe and Oceania would participate. FIFA said in an editorial that the Federation's first attempt in 1962 to start this competition was unsuccessful, but at that time less than half of the continental confederations were holding such championships in their own areas. "Today, however, the situation has changed," said FIFA News. The winners of the European Cup and the South American Cup have been meeting for the last ten years to play off for an unofficial World Club championship. But these games have been marred in recent years by ugly incidents on the field. FIFA News emphasised that regulations for a new competition should guarantee that it was carried out in harmony and a true sporting spirit. Power should be granted to the organisers to allow them to take immediate measures to punish any abuse or infringement of the laws of the game.

CASABLANCA: Morocco will play fellow World Cup qualifiers Italy as part of their warm-up programme, the Royal Moroccan Football Association announced today. The Moroccans will meet the Italian team in Italy on May 6 . . . and an as yet undesignated West German side three days later. The training programme includes matches with Slovan Bratislava and Seville. They will also play Benfica in Casablanca on March 12 and Fiorentina in Florence on April 1.

LIMA: Peru's World Cup squad last night beat Yugoslavia's Dynamo Zagreb 2-1 in the second match of a series of games against foreign teams in preparation for the Mexico finals. Last Saturday, in the first warm-up game, Peru only managed a 2-2 draw against Dynamo Zagreb.

JANUARY 24

LIMA, PERU: Brazilian star Pele said here today that he favoured Brazil, England, Czechoslovakia or Italy to win the forth-

coming World Cup. Pele who arrived here with his club Santos to play Universitario predicted that the 1970 finals would produce the best football in the history of the game.

JANUARY 25

LIMA, PERU: Pele scored two goals as Santos demolished Peruvian Champions Universitario 4-1 in a friendly today.

VINA DEL MAR, CHILE: Chilean club Everton were beaten by Czechoslovakia's World Cup squad 4-2 after leading 2-1 at half-time. Bicovsky (21), Findejs (35), Vesely (52) and Stratil (60) scored for the Czechs while Zarate netted for Everton in the 29th and 79th minutes.

SPLIT, YUGOSLAVIA: Russia's World Cup squad crashed to Yugoslavian league side Hajduk Split in a friendly today. The local side attacked vigorously from the start and after missing several good opportunities went ahead when Jerkovic (36) outjumped Afonin to head home a lob from right-winger Ivkovic. Five minutes later (41) Puzach equalised for the Russians but the enthusiastic 22,000 crowd saw their favourites rewarded for their heavy pressure. First Bajevic (63) restored the lead with another header then Ivkovic (86) completed the rout following a corner. This was the first of three matches the Russians have lined up against Yugoslav sides in preparation for Mexico.

CASABLANCA, MOROCCO: As part of their World Cup build up Morocco drew with European Cup Winners' Cup holders Slovan Bratislava 1-1 here today. Moder (42) equalised for the Czechs after Bamous (16) had given the Moroccans the lead.

MELBOURNE: Four goals from Marin Tufan inspired a Rumanian Select Eleven to a 6-1 (2-1) victory over the combined Victorian State League side here tonight. The Rumanians fielded many of their Olympic Games squad.

LISBON: Benfica's First Division match with Belenenses was abandoned after 43 minutes today. Roughly 5,000 fans invaded the pitch when two Benfica stars were sent-off. It all started early on when Portugal centre-forward Jose Torres was ordered from the pitch. Then, the restless crowd were inflamed when full-back Malta da Silva was told to follow him. Referee Joao Nogueira raced to the dressing rooms as the fans came onto the pitch but fell, hurting a leg and an arm. Three policemen were injured and one spectator arrested as baton swinging police tried to restore sanity. There was no score at the time of the incident. Another casualty was Belenenses inside-right Valter who was struck on the leg by an umbrella. It is believed that this is the first time in Portuguese soccer history that a League match has ended in such circumstances and the outcome will depend on the referee's report to the Central Commission. Benfica Chairman Dr. Borges Coutinho said that although both the club's Directors and the Police had guaranteed order until the end of the match play could not be resumed because of the referee's injuries.

ROME: Italy scoring sensation Luigi Riva moved to the top of the Italian scoring charts today after scoring one of Cagliari's four goals in their win over Brescia. His 21 goals from 18 League matches is one more than Vicenza centre-forward Sandro Vitali. That win keeps Cagliari four points clear of Juventus in the race for the *Scudetto*. Fiorentina's 3-1 triumph over Sampdoria puts them up into third place.

JANUARY 26

ZURICH: FIFA announced here today that next month they will name 30 referees for the World Cup in Mexico. They will be designated by a FIFA Referees Committee meeting in Parish on February 14 and 15 and will consist of nine from countries that have qualified for the Finals, three from Mexico and 18 from neutral countries who failed to reach the Finals. Referees chosen will be asked to participate in an acclimatisation and briefing course in Mexico City from May 24 to 30 just before the start of the competition.

HAMILTON, BERMUDA: Dr. Gerard Bean, an official of the Bermudan Football Association, said here today that Glasgow Celtic are expected to visit for a one week tour starting May 24. He added that arrangements were also being made to bring Manchester United over for a time during either April or May.

JANUARY 27

LIMA, PERU: Continuing their World Cup preparations, Peru beat Czech Champions Spartak Trnava in front of 42,000 fans in the National Stadium. Peru completely dominated things and goals from Teofilo Cubillas in the 15th and 22nd minutes put them 2-0 ahead by the interval. Trnava had a better second-half. Kuna pulled one back after 55 minutes and Puso added a second ten minutes from time. In between however, Gallardo scored a third for Peru

JANUARY 28

MILAN: The Third Round, second-leg, Fairs Cup match between Inter-Milan and Barcelona was abandoned after 33 minutes tonight because of fog. Inter won the first leg 2-1 and were leading 1-0 when the game was stopped prematurely. Boninsegna scored the goal seconds before the referee ended the game.

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil centre-forward Eduardo Goncalves (Tostao) left for Los Angeles tonight with a possible comeback in mind. Tostao, rated as No. 2 to only Pele by many Brazilians, had an operation for a detached retina in Houston Clinic last October. He made the trip to see whether doctors thought his eye was sufficiently better for him to start training with Brazil's World Cup squad of which he is a vital member. The training begins on February 12 and Tostao is confident he can make it. He plans to spend a few days in California before making Houston on February 2 or 3.

LISBON: Champions Benfica were banned from using their stadium today after last Sunday's incidents in the match with Belenenses. The Portuguese Football Federation decided this after a four-hour meeting and said that no further matches could be played there until an investigation has been carried out into the riot. The two Benfica players who were sent-off; Torres and Silva, were each given severe suspensions; six and five weeks respectively. The ban is expected to cost the club heavily financially.

JAFFA: Israel's World Cup side were beaten by Holland in an international here today. Bokamp scored the only goal after just four minutes.

● *Continued on page 29*

The scene at the World Cup draw in Mexico City. (SD)

SUPER LEAGUE?

BY
BRIAN GLANVILLE

A EUROPEAN Championship during the 'seventies? Herrera thinks there will be; Rous says, "Never", and I don't think I want one any more.

Having proposed and advocated it for so many years, this may seem a rather drastic piece of apostasy. But if circumstances alter cases, facts must alter opinions. Ideally, that is to say in ideal conditions (rather like Marx's doubtful Theory of Surplus Value), I should still like to see a European League. But as things stand, I am convinced it would do a great deal more harm than good. My reasons for opposing it are very different from that of Sir Stanley Rous—who, despite his internationalism, has never looked kindly on the idea—but they seem to me depressingly valid.

Broadly speaking, the more important the competition the more there is at stake, the more negative and ruthless it seems to become. The skulduggery of inter-European competition, both at club and international level, has become a byword. As this competition has become more widely diffused, as British clubs have grown more and more deeply involved in it, so this poison has spread to Britain.

The abolition of the maximum wage has a good deal to do with it as well —of course it has. As stakes grow higher, so tactics become more cautious, morality less absolute. In other words you tend, if you are a manager, to concentrate on defence and to encourage your players, if not in so many words, to maltreat their opponents.

MANIFESTED

One might, I think, call this the Italian Poison, something which one knew and identified in Italian football as long ago as the early 1950s and which, if it has not spread as widely and disastrously in Britain, has certainly manifested itself.

Italy was the first country in which professionalism was allowed to run riot, bonuses, salaries and transfer fees to reach wild, usually uneconomic heights. This in itself might well have been enough to ensure the symptoms of the disease which I have already isolated; negativity and violence. But in Italy, there was something else in the air which exacerbated the disease. Italians, by nature, are talented, experimental, adventurous players. To turn them into the negative, defensive, robot-players required by an over-professionalised League, you had to make them over-compensate—become, if you wish, more royalist than the King.

For years, the Campionato has been a byword for defensive thuggery and tactical caution. At the beginning of the present season, an Italian Under-21 team came to play Aston Villa, at Villa Park, and so thoroughly brainwashed were its players, could not attack, even when it was ordered to!

My own belief is that a European League, though ostensibly it would unite the finest teams and talents of the old world and present fans with a cornucopia of glittering entertainment, would in fact lead to caution, sterility and brutality.

EMPHASISED

Helenio Herrera, when I spoke to him, said that aviation made it a natural and inevitable development of the game. Rous emphasised the problems of promotion and relegation; all might, he thought, be well were the bottom teams able to return season by season to their own Leagues (though who, one wonders, would take their places, and on what basis?). Rous thinks that every country needs a strong championship, though one sufficiently small to permit clubs to release their players for international matches, while the jam on this bread and butter should be provided by Cup tournaments.

Perhaps, however, the most conclusive and intractable argument against a European League is the purely pragmatic one advanced by the young Milan President, Franco Carraro. Very logically, he believes that the Italian League simply couldn't survive, economically, if such clubs as his own, Juventus and Internazionale, were removed from it.

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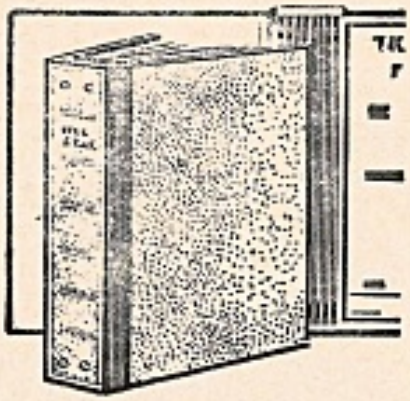

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Everton centre-forward JOE ROYLE pictured in action this season. Royle already has an autobiography on the market. (A)

I myself am no friend of those two thoroughly ersatz tournaments, the Fairs Cup and the Cup Winners Cup, while I believe that the European Cup itself needs a long, cool reappraisal. I should like very much to see the end of the misbegotten European Nations Cup — or, failing that, a drastic reorganisation.

Of the last ill-starred competition, in Italy, one retains horrendous memories; that kicking match between England and Yugoslavia in Florence; that fiasco when Italy knocked out Russia in Naples on the toss of a coin, from a semi-final which it had taken them both two years to reach. My sympathies are all with the Cattericks and the Walls, who are so reluctant to release their players (though more with the Evertons than the Arsenals, who can rest assured that the demands made on them will be very light indeed).

FIFTH-RATE

I was complaining recently about the glut of fifth-rate soccer books published in the hope of exploiting the present, almost frenetic interest in the game.

Soon afterwards I was astonished to see on a bookshop stand a volume called *ROYLE FLUSH* — the purported autobiography of Joe Royle, the 20-year-old Everton centre-forward. Quite apart from the cheap pun in its title, the cheapness, the very effrontery, of the idea which motivated it almost took the breath away.

I am an admirer of Royle, a splendid young centre-forward with a fine present, a marvellous future, and a likeable demeanour. But to publish an "autobiography" after a couple of seasons in the game is impertinence, on the part of those responsible, at best, cynical at worst.

APOLOGIA

The book comes from the familiar stable of Pelham Books, the same firm which, a few years ago, published a novel called *GOLDEN BOOTS*, purporting to come from the pen of Denis Law. I still treasure the apologia of its "ghost", when taxed with having written the thing. True, he said, Law had not written it, but had he done so this, he believed, was the sort of book he would have written. Pelham, at the same time, issued a similar "novel" purporting to be written by Gary Sobers, and another which I believe was attributed to a motor-racing driver.

WELCOME

The whole, shoddy idea foundered amidst a welter of scornful criticism. My *SUNDAY TIMES* colleague, Mr. Michael Parkinson, wrote that anyone who wished to collect the books from his home was welcome to do so; each was autographed as though by the author. Actually, he had written the autographs himself . . . but what difference did that make?

No more Royle Flushes, please.

FLOGGING

During my conversation with Helenio Herrera, he strongly advocated the return of foreign players to Italian football. It was illogical, he said, that when film stars could and did come from anywhere, foreign stars should be banned from the Italian Championship.

I think he is flogging a dead horse. Since the war, foreigners were for long the pawns, the scapegoats, of Italian football, excluded when the national team did badly, recalled when things went better. Over the past four years, however, they have been stonily excluded, and the consequence, on the face of it, has been the most successful Italian national team for years, the emergence of a crop of talented young players, and the winning of the European Cup and world title by Milan. Franco Carraro emphasised to me, in a conversation last year, that the ban on foreign players had allowed Milan to persevere with a footballer such as Anquilletti, who had established himself so brilliantly in their highly successful team.

Cliff Lloyd, of the PFA, on the other hand, seems to assume that if Britain enters the Common Market the present restrictions on foreign footballers must go. Has Mr. Lloyd forgotten that Italy are already in the Common Market?

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Print the players' names in the columns provided from top to bottom, making sure no two lines are identical. Then in the space provided on the coupon, write in no more than 15 words why you would like to go to Mexico. Entries are free and you may send in more than one coupon. Family or individual coupons may be sent in one envelope. Closing date for this competition is **March 12, 1970.**

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FORWARDS OR STRIKERS

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2. An entrant may make five free entries for each issue of WORLD SOCCER magazine, although each coupon must be from WORLD SOCCER magazine. Plain paper entries will not be accepted.

3. Entries must be received by us not later than March 12, 1970. Entries received after this date will be ignored.

4. No responsibility is accepted for entries lost or delayed in transit. Illegible or ambiguous entries will be declared void. Mark your entry carefully and clearly.

5. The prize of a trip for two people to Mexico City for the 1970 World Cup competition includes hotel accommodation, match tickets. They will be awarded to the competitor whose entry is adjudged to be the most meritorious.

6. In the interpretation of these rules and in dealing with any unforeseen eventuality, the decision of the Editor is final and binding. No correspondence will be entered into. Acceptance of all rules is a condition of entry.

All tickets and travel arrangements offered as prizes in this competition have been arranged through Shaw International Travel Ltd., specialists in tours of this nature.

PICTURED LEFT:

Goalkeepers: Gordon Banks, Peter Bonetti.

Defenders: Keith Newton, Brian Labone, Jackie Charlton, Emlyn Hughes, Tommy Wright, Terry Cooper, Norman Hunter, Bobby Moore.

MIDFIELD: Colin Harvey, Colin Bell, Bobby Charlton, Tommy Smith, Alan Mullery, Martin Peters.

Forwards: Francis Lee, Joe Royle, Allan Clarke, Geoff Hurst, Jeff Astle, Alan Ball.

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Manchester City to Visit Australia?

by ANDREW DETTRE

INTER BRATISLAVA and the Rumanian "B" team in January, Moscow Dynamo in February and probably Manchester City in May and June—this is the rich international fare Australian fans will happily devour in 1970. Inter, with World Cup stars Szikora and Petras, were the first visitors in the middle of January and while they failed to set the world on fire, proved to be one of those almost innumerable efficient, polished, professional - looking teams we are always pleased to see here.

At first Inter defeated Sydney club Prague 3-1 and a few days later easily beat New South Wales 3-0. Neither opposition stretched the slick Slovaks to their limit who, accordingly, were quite content to score when they absolutely had to, then loaf through the rest of the match. A day after the match against NSW Inter travelled to Newcastle where, in pouring rain, they thrashed Northern NSW 7-0.

The Rumanians, billed as their Olympic team, fared similarly. They beat South Australia 1-0 in Adelaide then defeated a combined Melbourne side 6-1. At the time of writing both tours are still in progress.

The presence of these four European sides could indicate to the uninitiated that Australia's national team which did so very well in 1969 will get some badly needed experience in 1970. Far from it: the national team will not play a single match against these visitors. With the sensitivity of somebody with something to hide, the Australian Federation will sweep the national team under the carpet.

They refuse to "expose the team" to the dangers of defeat by the hands of mere club teams —and so will deprive it of matches throughout 1970. They could, of course, field them as "Commonwealth" or "Kangaroos" or what you like, just so long as they play; neither Yachin nor Tony Brook would object one bit.

HIBERNATION

In fact, the national team is in for what appears to be a long hibernation. Australia will not take part in the Merdeka tournament because the date doesn't seem to suit the clubs; neither in the King's Cup of Thailand where they have not been invited. Short of going on a tour later in the year—highly unlikely because of the traditional and characteristic inertia within the Federation — Australia will not play a single international this year.

The domestic season is about to start in all states but main interest is centred on the Sydney championship. Sydney clubs now clearly dominate the Australian scene and have, between them, some 95 per cent of the national squad players.

Much of the summer months passed quietly. However, as usual, club officials did make some noise about their plans for the 1970 season which almost always referred to the necessity of grooming their own local young players instead of importing them from Britain and the absolutely urgent need for more top coaches from Europe.

VETERAN

What these clubs do with the youngsters they groom I know not; the fact is that the majority of them have again imported or are about to do so quite a heap of British players—most of them utterly unknown. A provincial club with vast reservoirs of young talent waiting to be tapped brought out no less than seven new players; another one is "hopeful" of getting at least four, including veteran Bobby Collins, now about 39, the former Scotland and Leeds ace. That much for the Australian youth policy.

Roughly the same goes on with the coaches. In the past three years only one Sydney club, St. George, has brought out a fully qualified coach from Europe, former Vojvodina man Frank Arok from Yugoslavia. The other clubs seem to prefer to rely purely and simply on local coaches—the majority of whom are former European players who just became too old to play and switched to coaching. But they do the job for very modest fees, in their part-time —unlike Arok, who is on a full-time contract and undoubtedly the highest paid coach in the land.

But Arok is getting results—while the other clubs are only trying to cut corners. The result: the standard of our club soccer is stagnating and, of course, without improvement there it's impossible to expect improvement on a national level. Which must be the best piece of news for our Asian rivals.

Aussie soccer, while not always skilful, can be a tough and bruising affair. Here Australian captain John Warren of St. George-Budapest is sandwiched between two Sydney Polonia defenders who, it seems, risk injury to get the ball away. (AD)

INTO EUROPE ...FOR CASH!

Scottish News by JOHN STONE

GET into Europe and make some cash. It's the most hackneyed phrase in soccer. Trouble is, it hardly applies any longer. In Scotland, at least!

Proof? Just ask Kilmarnock and Dunfermline, two of Scotland's most progressive provincial First Division clubs, and 66.66% of Scotland's representation in this season's Fairs Cup competition.

Far from making money out of the tournament, the Ayrshiremen and the Fifers hardly got rich quick.

In effect, Kilmarnock boss Walter McCrae estimates that three ties in this season's Fairs Cup cost them a cool £6,000.

Dunfermline, more financially fortunate, reckon they just about broke even.

There's money in Europe? Not to Killie or the Pars. In effect, Dundee United, the third member of Scotland's Fairs Cup trio, went out in the opening round to holders Newcastle—yet on the basis of home and away games at Tannadice and St. James's Park, the Dundonians made a few bob!

SUBSIDISED

Top English clubs have, of course, wailed for years that they have subsidised 90% of competing clubs from the Continent in European Cup, Cup Winners Cup and the Fairs.

With attendances like they can draw at Old Trafford, on Merseyside, Leeds and London, England's big brass certainly do subsidise the smaller European nations.

But obviously, Scottish provincial clubs have had to subsidise themselves while trying to make and mend in Europe.

Let's look at matters more closely. Take Dundee United to begin with.

They drew a 21,000 gate for the visit of Newcastle in September, when they lost 2-1 at home. Twenty-one thousand is a ruddy good gate for Tannadice.

PRIVILEGE

For the return leg, there was a 37,000-plus gate at Newcastle. The Geordies duly won that leg 1-0, went on to the next round, and both clubs made money.

Bills for two-way trips between Dundee and Newcastle were far from financially crippling. One British side went out, but not having had to pay for the privilege of playing.

Now take Kilmarnock. They pulled only a 13,000 gate to Rugby Park for their opening home clash with FC Zurich. They had got 4,500 more in Switzerland for the first leg, but they went through.

Same round, and Dunfermline smash Bordeaux at East End Park 4-0 ... but with only 10,000 people watching.

They duly win the return leg, losing 0-2 but qualifying comfortably, watched by nobody at all.

Next round ... Dunfermline beat Gwardia of Poland in Fife, draw another poor home gate, go to Warsaw leading 2-1 and get through, winning 1-0 in Warsaw ... but oh, those travelling costs.

Killie, at the same time, have Slavia Sofia at Rugby Park, thrash the Bulgarians 4-1, but attract only 12,500.

They then have to fly to Bulgaria, lose 2-0 to a gate that has never been truly established, and are through round two.

COMPETITION

So both remaining Scottish clubs have Iron Curtain country trips.

Does it get better. Well ... does it? You tell me, or Kilmarnock, or Dunfermline.

The Fifers then are paired with Anderlecht, win 3-2 at East End Park before 11,000 people, having lost 1-0 before 14,000 in Holland. Dunfermline go out on goals away, having made precisely nothing from the competition.

Kilmarnock fare even worse in the draw. They are coupled with Dinamo Bacau of Rumania, are held to a 1-1 draw at Rugby Park and are already heading out of the tournament.

Only 10,000 people turn up and Killie then face yet another charter-flight trip behind the "Curtain".

Predictably, they lost in Bacau, where the Rumanians get a 20,000 home gate and duly win 2-0.

Alex McAnespie of Ayr United (white shirt) challenges Kilmarnock foward Eddie Morrison for possession. Looking on is Ricky Fleming of Ayr United.

Bacau, from a country with no Welfare State, go marching on to meet Arsenal at Highbury. Arsenal, God bless their cheek, then ask Killie for a full report on the Rumanians, whom they cannot watch because by now, the Rumanian season is in its mid-season weather break.

Killie, of course, are happy to oblige.

But in the meantime, those trips to Sofia and Bacau have cost them a small packet.

£6,000 doesn't seem much to some clubs. It's one helluva lot to Kilmarnock. When they spend £8,000 on a player, they are spending big, Big, BIG.

And the amazing fact is that, while it has been costly to Killie, Walter McCrae still insists: "We didn't go into the tournament to lose money. We have done, but what wonderful experience it must be for our young players."

Walter and his Board are much more philosophical than I would be.

Ayrshire deserves a kick in the pants for their lack of interest. So does Fife.

Fans scream for the top names in football. When they get attractive overseas visitors, they simply shrug it all off.

And both clubs want to go back in again for more punishment.

Bless them for their swashbuckling belief in bringing the goods to their own doorsteps. But help them, you paying public.

European League Review

ATLETICO HAMMER POOR REAL

by ROGER MACDONALD

SAVOUR the score-line: ATLETICO BILBAO 5, REAL MADRID 0. Not in 17 years have Real Madrid, probably the most famous, and for a long time undoubtedly the greatest club side in the world, suffered such indignity. One has to go back to the 1952–53 season, when Malaga beat Real 6-0, to find a comparative disaster ... and that, of course, was in the days before the arrival of Alfredo Di Stefano.

Real have been crumbling away for some years, but hitherto there had been no positive sign of a major structural failure. They have continued to qualify for the European Cup without difficulty, and as Spanish football merged artistry with defensive caution, came near to completing a season without a single defeat. But the real stars have gone—even Amancio seems to save his best performances for games against the little clubs: a hat-trick, recently, against the impoverished Las Palmas side.

In Bilbao, however, Real found a Spanish side able to keep on the pressure from the first minute to the last. The training schedule set by Ronnie Allen, former Wolves manager, has proved both exhaustive and exhausting, but for Bilbao it has brought a new era of glamour after a decade in the doldrums. And on this particular Sunday it brought a result that stunned Spain and sent a buzz around Europe.

For 44 minutes in front of the packed San Mames crowd, Real gave as good as they got; if anything, Iribar had more to cope with than his 6 ft. 3 in. opposite number, Junquera. But in the remaining 60 seconds Junquera inexplicably dropped a simple ball and Uriate gleefully stabbed in the first goal. It was the first trickle of the waterfall, for after the break Bilbao played like tigers and centre-forward Zubiaga hit a hat-trick. A fifth goal by wing-half Igartua completed the rout, and for Real nothing went right—for Amancio even missed a penalty.

The match was a personal triumph for Jose Francisco Rojo, Atletico's international outside-left, who had certainly the best game of his career. Rojo, who had celebrated his 24th birthday in the previous week, always promised something exceptional, but somehow lacked the drive and determination that characterises a great player. Yet on this day he was a force of nature, beating man after man and providing three irresistible passes for three irresistible goals.

At the final whistle Ronnie Allen sat for a moment on his trainer's bench, as though he could not quite believe the result. Then he was engulfed by a frenetic mob of players and supporters. "It was difficult even then," said Ronnie afterwards, "to grasp that we had humiliated Real Madrid. I've always regarded them as the untouchables, a phenomena out of reach. To beat a great club like this is one of the outstanding moments of my career."

For all that, Bilbao still lead the Spanish League only on goal average. On the very same day Atletico Madrid beat Granada 5-0, and all five of their goals came in the second half—two from Garate, two from Luis, the last from Adelardo. The championship remains as open as ever, and it might not be resolved until Bilbao take on Atletico at San Mames on April 5, three weeks before the end of the season.

Yet both the leaders have escaped recent defeats by the skin of their teeth. Zubiaga popped up to save a point at Zaragoza after he had missed an open goal minutes earlier and all seemed lost. This was a particularly violent game, with Bilbao's Jose Batsuen and Zaragoza's Paraguayan Ocampos both sent off—Ocampos shortly after opening the score.

On the same day Atletico Madrid travelled to Valencia and made a disastrous start. Melo put through his own goal with a terrible back pass and when Paquito came up to score a second goal for Valencia the situation looked desperate. Atletico were still two down with 30 minutes left, when Iruretagoyena scored with a fine shot and they were back in the game. Luis Aragones, at 32 approaching the veteran stage, produced some darting runs out of nothing and beat Pesudo twice in quick succession for a remarkable victory.

PORTUGAL

IF Real Madrid are struggling, three points behind the leaders, Benfica are in real trouble—seven points in arrears to Sporting Lisbon and their ground closed after a riot.

The trouble started when Benfica met Belenenses at the Stadio da Luz and had two players sent off with the referee, Joao Nogueira, both for violent play. Benfica's captain, Jose Torres, was the first to go and when full-back Malta da Silva followed him just before half-time the crowd went berserk. About a thousand spectators poured on to the field and made for the referee, who sprinted frantically for the dressing-rooms, only to fall down the stone steps leading to the tunnel, injuring a leg and an arm. The police made only one arrest, taking into custody the spectator who struck one of the Belenenses players, Valter, on the head with his umbrella. Three policemen were also injured before they got the crowd back behind the touchline.

After a conference between Benfica's chairman, Dr. Borges Coutinho, and a police superintendent, extra police were moved into the ground and ringed the touchline. But the referee was too badly shaken to continue, and under Portuguese League regulations, no substitute was possible under such circumstances. So the game was abandoned without a goal, leaving Benfica's ground under suspension until the League hold a full inquiry.

So Benfica are playing in the meantime at the National Stadium, without both Torres and Da Silva. Torres, not exactly guiltless this season, received a six-match suspension; Da Silva got a five-match ban, rather harsh for a player with a reasonably good record, but no doubt the Portuguese FA felt they had to make an example.

Sporting Lisbon now look almost certain to take the title, though they were given a fright by Setubal, almost the only other club with even a faint chance of overtaking them. Setubal led 1-0 from the 13th minute through Wagner, and at half-time were still ahead. But in the 57th minute Lourenco collected a long clearance, spun past his nearest opponent and equalised. Thereafter it was all Sporting, and Lourenco headed his second goal before coming off for a rest. It was left for his substitute, Chico, to score the third.

After an hour a great roar had gone up from the crowd, not because Sporting had scored, but because Benfica had lost, quite unexpectedly, at Guimaraes. Benfica enjoyed

NESTOR COMBIN of AC Milan.

most of the play from the kick-off, but fell behind in the 36th minute when Fonseca unwisely came out and Zebinho lobbed the ball over his head. Five minutes later Manuel scored Guimaraes' second goal, and though Benfica pulled one back through Abel in the second half, an equaliser proved beyond their powers.

ITALY

STILL Cagliari out in front, but a super-human effort by Juventus brought them within striking distance of the Sardinians. Juventus were beaten on November 9, 1-0 at Naples, the climax to a terrible start to the season which began with four successive defeats. But on November 16 Juventus drew 1-1 with Cagliari, and followed this success with eight wins in a row, equalling the record set by Inter-Milan back in 1939–40. A new record eluded them when Bologna held them to a goalless draw.

Best game of the month was probably that between Lanerossi Vicenza and Cagliari, which brought into direct opposition the two best scorers in the league, Vitali and Riva. It was Riva who came off best, putting Cagliari ahead in the 19th minute and increasing their lead with a truly sensational run in the 70th minute. Vitali did manage to score eight minutes from the end from a free-kick, but Cagliari still took both points.

On the same day Pierino Prati of AC Milan scored four goals in the away match at Bari—in the first, 51st, 71st and 78th minutes. Nestor Combin got Milan's fifth goal, after 17 minutes, but generally is having a poor season—playing out of place on the right wing. As for poor Bari, they went 674 minutes without scoring before Mario Fara got a goal against the bottom club, Brescia ... from a penalty.

Another club doing well after a poor start, Napoli, took their unbeaten run to ten games by beating Torino 4-0 in front of 65,000. Jose Altafini got the first goal after 11 minutes and had a brilliant match. Even at 30, he remains such a formidable player, that there has been serious talk of Brazil recalling him for their World Cup squad, especially if Tostao fails in his comeback. Napoli have also tightened up their defence, which had an especially good afternoon against Fiorentina, where Napoli won 2-1.

Inter-Milan, in spite of disposing of Barcelona after a protracted European Fairs Cup-tie, look out of the championship race. They badly needed both points away to Bologna, and started brightly enough, centre-forward Boninsegna scoring just 100 seconds after the kick-off. But two defensive errors in the space of 11 minutes cost them the points. Even Suarez, returned to mid-field after a spell as free back, cannot be in two places at once.

GREECE

DEFEAT, at long last, for Panathinaikos, and the architect was their former star, Loukanidis. Now with Aris Salonika and well into his thirties, Loukanidis reserved something special for his old club and dominated the match. Spyridion put Aris ahead in the 24th minute, with a quite sensational diving header from a low corner; and after a series of desperate scrambles in the Panathinaikos penalty area, Alexiadis scored the second goal that Aris fully deserved.

Olympiakos wasted their chance to make up the deficit by dropping a home point to PAOK. And they have still to play Pierikos at Katerini, where Panathinaikos won only with great difficulty. The leaders scored twice soon after the start, through Rodkis and Antoniadis, which would have finished most teams; but Pierikos came storming back. Panathinaikos tried some rough play in their own penalty area, and the result was two penalties—both taken calmly and accurately by centre-forward Kambas. There is normally a scene over one penalty kick in a Greek match, so you can imagine the disorder on this occasion. But in the second half Panathinaikos pulled themselves together, and their young winger Grammos scored the decisive goal.

TURKEY

ALTAY IZMIR, dropping home points against weak teams, lost their place at the top of the table to Fenerbahce, now favourites to win the championship.

Fenerbahce showed their best form in the local derby with Besiktas, the 161st encounter between the two clubs, which gives you an idea of their durability. A capacity crowd of 40,000 packed into the Mithatpassa stadium, and got full value for their money. Both teams produced their very best, and the match hung in the balance until the final whistle. The decisive goal fell to Fenerbahce in the 65th minute —an irresistible shot by Nedim from an equally irresistible pass by Can.

● Continued on page 34

Searching the Soccer scene with ARTHUR ROTMIL

THE outstanding events of the past month were undoubtedly the two draws: One for the World Cup finals in Mexico and England's 0-0 with Holland at Wembley. Despite the storm of criticism which followed their uninspiring display one cannot overlook the fact that England's defence-in-depth method has prevented a goal in the last three matches and that Ramsey's team still remains one of the most difficult to beat.

The tough draw in the Guadalajara group is softened by the realisation that as holders they did not have to play qualifying matches. Also that England—like the previous winners—have kept the world title for four years unchallenged. After all, there is no other sport in which a champion is allowed to hold on to his crown for so long. Whether England can retain the World is of course quite another matter.

Brazil have even more reason to moan that their task is fraught with danger. Strangely enough, in the last three final series they were always plunged into the strongest groups: 1958, with England Russia and Austria (who were third in the previous series); 1962 with Czechoslovakia, Spain and Mexico; 1966 with Hungary, Portugal and Bulgaria. In Chile, Brazil were also paired with the Czechs, and both went on to dispute the Final. Perhaps history will repeat itself? But then every World Cup has produced its quota of shocks. Although England failed to beat any of her three group opponents in their last meeting (v. Brazil 1-2; v. Czechoslovakia 0-0; v. Rumania 1-1) they could still emerge as the surprise team of the tournament.

It looks as if Brazil will enjoy the longest period of acclimatisation to altitude of any visiting side. They are due to arrive in Mexico on April 5 — fully two months before their first game! They will train on the ground of the Providence club and play several matches against local teams in the Jalisco stadium at Guadalajara, the scene of the group games. Earlier, five internationals are planned in March against Argentina and Chile. At the moment their main worry is the fitness of their brilliant striker Tostao who is waiting to hear from specialists whether the recent operation on his eye retina has been completely successful.

Czechoslovakia start their preparations officially on February 10. Under coach Jozef Marko the squad will train at Font Romeu, the famous centre in the Pyrenee-mountains at 6,000 feet above sea level where the French athletes prepared for the 1968 Olympics. The Czechs hope to play at least three internationals, the first against Austria in Vienna on March 10. The others probably versus Ecuador, Colombia or Venezuela. Failing this, they may arrange two test matches with European opponents. Marko, who doesn't believe in improvisation, hopes to reap rewards from the four-year plan which began immediately after their elimination from the 1966 series.

Rumania had been promised by their government that no financial means will be spared to insure a detailed preparation of the national side. Until February 10, the squad led by manager Angelo Niculescu and his assistant Emerich Vogl have been touring South America with games in Brazil, Chile and Peru. Their last international before leaving for Mexico will take place on May 6, in Bucharest against Yugoslavia.

This at-a-glance chart provides the principal information about England's immediate World Cup rivals:

BRAZIL:

Previous best in World Cup: Winners 1958, 1962; runners-up 1950, 3rd 1938.

Results v. England:

1956 Wembley, lost 2-4.
1958 Gothenburg (Sweden W/C), drew 0-0.
1959 Rio, won 2-0.
1962 Vina del Mar (Chile W/C), won 3-1.
1963 Wembley, drew 1-1.
1964 Rio, won 5-1.
1969 Rio, won 2-1.

1969 Results:

April 7: Porto Alegre v. Peru, won 2-1.
April 9: Rio v. Peru, won 3-2.
June 12: Rio v. England, won 2-1.
August 6: Bogota v. Colombia, won 2-0.
August 10: Caracas v. Venezuela, won 5-0.
August 17: Asuncion v. Paraguay, won 3-0.
August 21: Rio v. Colombia, won 6-2.
August 24: Rio v. Venezuela, won 6-0.
August 31: Rio v. Paraguay, won 1-0.

Team manager: Joao Saldanha.

Last line-up: Felix; Carlos Alberto; Djalma Dias, Joel, Rildo; Piazza, Gerson; Jairzinho, Tostao, Pelé, Edu.

Special features: Goalkeeper Felix has been discarded, whilst the selected "goleiros" Ado (Corinthians) and Leao (Palmeiras) may lack international experience. Question marks also against the defence where both Djalma Dias and Rildo may be ruled out because of troublesome injuries and replaced by untried youngsters. Very strong in midfield, particulary Gerson. The best forward line in the world with the brilliant goal-scoring tandem Pelé-Tostao (if fit).

CZECHOSLOVAKIA:

Previous best in World Cup: Runners-up 1934, 1962.

One player England are almost certain to come up against in Mexico this year is Joel of Santos and Brazil. (Met)

Results v. England:

1934 Prague, won 2-1.
1938 Tottenham, lost 4-5.
1963 Bratislava, lost 2-4.
1966 Wembley, drew 0-0.

1969 Results:

April 16: Rotterdam v. Holland, lost 0-2.
May 4: Dublin v. Eire, won 2-1.
May 25: Budapest v. Hungary, lost 0-2.
September 14: Prague v Hungary, drew 3-3.
October 7: Prague v. Eire, won 3-0.
December 3: Marseille v. Hungary, won 4-1.

Team manager: Jozef Marko.

Last line-up: Viktor; Pivarnik, Horvath, Migas, Hagara; Kvasnak, Kuna, (Pollak); Vesely, Jokl, Adamec, Petras.

Special features: Excellent goalkeeper; very strong defence marshalled by Horvath; superb midfield axis with the vastly experienced Kvasnak and "Footballer of the Year" Kuna; speedy winger Vesely and dangerous striker Adamec.

Brazil to arrive two months early

RUMANIA:

Previous best in World Cup: Three times in finals without progress.

Results v. England:

1939 Bucharest, lost 0-2.
1968 Bucharest, drew 0-0.
1969 Wembley, drew 1-1.

1969 Results:

January 15: Wembley v. England, drew 1-1.
April 16: Athens v. Greece, drew 2-2.
April 30: Paris v. France, lost 0-1.
May 14: Lausanne v Switzerland, won 1-0
September 3: Belgrade v Yugoslavia, drew 1-1.
October 12: Bucharest v Portugal, won 1-0.
November 16: Bucharest v Greece, drew 1-1.

Team manager: Angelo Niculescu.

Last line-up: Raducanu; Satmareanu, Halmageanu, Dan Coe, Deleanu; Dinu, Nunweiller; Dembrovski, Dobrin, Dumitrache, Lucescu.

Special features: Very tight defence built around Dan Coe, the most capped member of the squad with 37; useful midfield players. Best forwards Nicolaus Dobrin and "Mops" Dumitrache.

THE "HUNGRY" EUROPEANS!

THE excitement caused by the World Cup draw and the general build-up towards its decisive stage have pushed the international club tournaments temporarily into the background. By way of a reminder here is the line-up for the European Cup quarter-finals to be played on March 4 and 18:

Champions Cup:

Standard Liege v. Leeds.
Celtic v. Fiorentina.
Vorwärts Berlin v. Feyenoord.
Galatasaray Istanbul v. Legia Warsaw.

Cup Winners Cup:

Academica Coimbra v. Manchester City.
Dynamo Zagreb v. Schalke.
Roma v. Goeztepe Izmir.
Levski-Spartak v. Górnik Zabrze.

In the first contest it would appear that the British sides Leeds and Celtic have drawn virtually the toughest opposition remaining. Thus, if they get through, the road to the Final may be the easiest for years. The eliminaton of such gants as Real Madrid, Benfica plus the holders and world champions AC Milan has thrown the competition wide open.

At the same time, those erstwhile masters of Europe have declined to such an extent that their dismissal from Round Two could have surprised only those still cherishing memories of past glories. From Italy, famous manager Helenio Herrera claims that these clubs have been swamped by their own successes. The players are tired (Milan) or failing to live up to past standards (Real) or simply over the hill, age-wise (Benfica).

The future—according to H.H.—belongs to the hungry fighters, to use a boxing adage; to teams and players who still have the incentive to grab fame but most of all keen on picking up fat bonuses. Herrera lists Standard Liege and Feyenoord as the principal contenders in this race for cash rewards.

I am inclined to agree, for obviously the Belgian or Dutch performers are grossly underpaid by standards say in Italy, England, Spain or even Portugal. That is why Leeds must beware of Liege, who will fight with greater enthusiasm and venom than Real or Benfica would currently have offered. Standard are no strangers to international competitions, and this is in fact their eighth European campaign. They have reached the semi-finals in both the Champions and Cup Winners' Cup tournaments.

Founded in 1898, Standard had to wait 60 years before winning their first League championship, in 1958. They have since added three more titles in 1961, 1963 and 1969 and also won the Belgian FA Cup in 1954, 1966 and 1967.

Standard's first appearance in the European Cup ended honourably in the quarter-finals against the then great Stade de Reims in 1958/59. They went one better in 1961/62, when, following victories over Fredrikstad (Norway), Valkeakoski (Finland), and Glasgow Rangers, they entered the semi-finals but lost to Real Madrid.

In 1963/64 Standard failed surprisingly against the Swedish side Norrköping. Next followed three consecutive appearances in the Cup Winners Cup: In 1965/66 they beat Cardiff City but fell to Liverpool. 1966/67 Standard knocked out Valur (Iceland), Limassol (Cyprus), Chemie Leipzig and Vasas Györ before losing the semi-final to Bayern Munich. 1967/68 the Belgians put out Altay Izmir, Aberdeen, but failed against AC Milan.

Last season it was their début in the Fairs Cup, and their first round opponents were . . . Leeds! Standard could have won through for, after a goalless home draw they led at Elland Road by 2-0 with little over half-an-hour to go, but eventually Leeds scored three times. . . .

Celtic will find the young, eager Florentina outfit just as difficult to overcome. Although the Italians have lacked consistency in recent league matches, the performance in dismissing the tough Russian champions Dynamo on their own ground in Kiev shows clearly what the Scots are up against. Florentina's defence—like all Italian rearguards—can be heartbreaking, as Celtic found out to their cost when they fell to AC Milan last season. But the Florentines also boast two World Cup forwards in Chiarugi and De Sisti plus the experienced Brazilian star Amarildo.

From the British point of view, Manchester City's chances of progress in the Cup Winners Cup must be rated infinitely higher. Joe Mercer's boys should, under normal conditions, and in their usual form, dispose of Academica, the student's team from Coimbra University. The Portuguese have useful forwards like Manuel Antonio, Campos and Nené plus a fine defender, Rodrigues. But their recent performances in the League have not been encouraging, and if they eliminate Manchester City it would be the biggest sensation of the tournament.

TOMMY BOOTH. (LPA)

SWEDEN by Eric Batty

MEXICO 70

'FOREIGN' STARS IN EVIDENCE

SINCE the second world war or more specifically since the Olympic Games of 1948, staged in London and won by the Swedes, the Swedish game has laboured under two enormous disadvantages. 1948 and the combined talents of half a dozen great players drew the attention of the world to the Swedish game and with the Italians already active since the thirties in the international market, the amateur Swedish stars were a really attractive proposition.

As amateurs there was no transfer fee to pay. All the foreign clubs had to do was agree cash terms with the player and take him. At the same time, the Swedes cannot and will probably never be able to turn professional, thus safeguarding themselves against those who would steal their best players . . . simply because the population of Sweden is not big enough to support a professional which, because of extremely cold weather conditions in winter could only play for five months of the year. Even in England, Italy or West Germany there are few clubs who could pay their players enough to keep them happy on gate receipts confined to a five month season.

Thus the Swedes are in a cleft stick. For them there is no way out and yet despite all the difficulties they have from time to time produced a national side which vies with the best in the World, and so it is that though they have often failed to reach the last 16 for the World Cup, when they do qualify, they have always done well. To date, once qualified they have never failed to reach the quarter finals and three times in four attempts they have gone further.

VfB Stuttgart's new signing, Swedish international Jan Olsson, will doubtless be an asset to the Bundesliga. (UPI)

Playing for the first time in the 1934 series, Sweden reached the quarter finals and in 1938 they reached the semi finals. Again in 1950 with the Gren, Nordahl, Liedholm team smashed only 18 months before—the Gre-No-Li inside forward trio being famous the World over and maybe the all-time great inside forward trio—the Swedes once more reached the last four. This was the year that England were eliminated after losing to the United States of America, while Sweden finally took third place.

QUALIFIED

From 1950 on, the Swedes lost so many fine players to professional clubs abroad that it seemed that no sooner did a good young player get capped than he was whipped up by some foreign scout and gone. Failing to qualify for the 1954 series, they would probably have failed again in 1958 had they been called upon to play in the preliminary matches, but as host nation they qualified automatically. With the series staged out of season, the Swedes were able to obtain the release of their foreign based stars like Nils Liedholm, Kurt Hamrin, Lennart "Nacka" Skoglund from Italy and with Gunnar Gren "Il Professore" in Italy already back at home but still playing in the middle 30's the Swedes had a ready made team.

Bergmark (the current boss) and Bengt Gustafsson were brilliant in defence while Liedholm and Gren organised the middlefield and up front Hamrin, Skoglund and a real new find Agne Simonsson who later went to Real Madrid the Swedes were good value for their success. Reaching the final and leading 1-0 after four minutes through Nils Liedholm, they were finally destroyed by the Didi-Garrincha-Pele trio of Brazil and finally went down 5-2.

Qualified once more, the Swedes have achieved the miracle very largely because of the efforts and the effect of Orvar Bergmark's leadership and inspiration and because for the critical matches they have been able to call up several of their emigre stars. They will all be available for the trip to Mexico too—and must be given a good chance of reaching the quarter finals and maintaining their record: when they qualify they never fail to reach the quarter finals at least.

* * *

After earning 94 caps (a Swedish record) playing for AIK and Orebro at home and having a spell in Italy with AS Roma, Orvar Bergmark gained his last cap in 1964. Less than 18 months later he was offered the job of national selector-coach. The challenge was a very real one for it takes a great player and a great coach with real personality to take charge of players who played alongside him . . . and blend them into a well organised smooth and efficient combination.

Bergmark achieved all this and more; he motivated every one of his players and for only the second time (1958 being the other exception) he prevented the home-based amateurs and the foreign-based professionals from dividing into two separated cliques.

Since taking over in April, 1966 Bergmark has sought to develop the best young talent available at home, often choosing youngsters with Second Division clubs and allowing them to prove he was right. The home-based players have played almost exclusively in the easier away games and all the matches counting for the Nordisk Cup, the Norway, Finland, Denmark, Sweden competition which is staggered over four years—and won the last series. He even turned out a home-based side in mid-1969 for a real game . . . away to Russia in Moscow and returned with a great 1-0 win with a goal scored by barely known Ove Eklund.

But for the World Cup qualifying matches two against Norway and one at home to France, Bergmark persuaded all the employers of the top Swedish professionals to release them. Thanks to Norway beating France early on, Bergmark took four points from Norway and then had only to win the home match against France to qualify. For this game, staged at the 58,000 capacity Rasunda Stadium in Stockholm . . . a sell-out for the first time in 11 years, Bergmark produced his best available team including Ove Grahn from Switzerland's Grasshoppers FC in Zurich and Feijenoord's Ove Kindvall, the man whose goals later took the Dutch club over the extremely difficult European Cup hurdle—represented by the holders of the trophy, AC Milan. It was Kindvall who turned the game against France scoring both goals, one from a penalty, in a 2-0 win.

Looking back at 1969 it is clear from the figures alone that Bergmark has done a remarkable job. In statistical terms alone

the Swedish performance is impressive to say the least Played 12, Won 10, Drawn 0, Lost 2.

The two defeats are worthy of note for they should be discounted because of the circumstances in which these two games were played. The first defeat was against Yugoslavia in February, which with the Swedish season running from April through to October was well out of season and was simply a warm-up match. Later when the passage to Mexico was assured, Bergmark gave experience to several of his home-based amateurs in the World Cup match against France in Paris. They lost 0-3 but it didn't matter for Bergmark already had his Mexico pass safely locked away.

Several matches on the credit side are worth thinking about too. In addition to winning 1-0 in Moscow which is itself no mean achievement, the Swedes also beat Hungary 2-0 and took a lot of goals at the expense of Norway, Finland and Denmark.

CHAMBER

Handicapped throughout the winter by conditions which make outdoor training impossible, Bergmark came up with a training idea which combined "altitude" with conditioning. The altitude training was made possible by the discovery in a Stockholm hospital of an experimental chamber big enough for five or six men to work in, running on moving leather belts, cycling, weight-lifting etc . . . in conditions that were scientifically created to simulate those found at Mexico altitudes.

Bergmark's real problems came down to only two. All the home based players are officially amateur but in fact poorly-paid part timers. Unlike their counterparts in Eastern Europe they have real jobs on which their living are hinged, but enthusiasm is so high that every man will get or take time off whenever Bergmark requests it. The second problem is of course presented by the professionals who are not being released by their clubs for simulated altitude training and will be unable to join their colleagues bound for Mexico until their foreign employers have completed their Cup and League programmes. Despite this, Bergmark who is the youngest (at 38) of all the selector-bosses making the Mexico trip is satisfied and confident and aims to leave for Mexico by May 19. This he said recently is ample time acclimatise and in any case, players don't like hanging about away from their families for too long unless there is good reason and plenty of action.

Tactically the Swedes are playing a 4-3-3 game similar to that on view in other countries but by changing the players a little he can under certain circumstances i.e. stronger or weaker opposition turn out a 4-4-2 or 4-2-4 team. Whatever the system or tactical framework Bergmark has insisted on **elasticity** and not a rigidly fixed tactical formation that retains its shape throughout the 90 minutes. If 4-2-4 is the shape the Swedes attack with 7 or 8 and defend with 8 or 9. Of course it calls for hard work and hard running all round, but this as Bergmark knows well is what the modern game is all about.

SWEDEN left to right: Agne Simonsson, Ronney Pettersson, Hans Selander, Kury Axelsson, Bjorn Nordqvist, Rolf Bjorklund, Jim Niklen, Tommy Svensson, Roger Magnusson, Inge Danielsson, Tom Turesson. (EB)

At the time of writing there is a slight doubt about the fitness of Bjorn Nordqvist the captain and one of the key figures in the side. Recovering from a fractured leg *earned* in December while playing for his club IFK Norrkoping in a Fairs Cup match with West Germany's Schalke 04, it is hoped that Nordqvist—the Swedes choice as Footballer of the year in 1968—will be fully fit and well run-in again in competitive matches in good time.

* * *

Among the stars in the Bergmark squad are Leif Eriksson, Kurt Axelsson, and Ove Kindvall who merit special attention though Bo Larsson, Tommy Svenson (first capped while a Division II player), Nordqvist, Grahn and Persson are all very fine players.

Eriksson, the left midfield who lines up at inside left is a real artist, and is both talented and skilful. A qualified lawyer, he has already declined several offers from professional clubs abroad, preferring to serve five years with Djurgaarden (in Stockholm) followed by a spell with Sirius with team of Uppsala University where he studied and qualified . . . and significantly helped move from Division III to Division I in two years and has now moved on to Bergmark's old club Orebro SK.

Kurt Axelsson was a left back and is now a centre back with Belgium's FC Bruges and can play at full back, stopper, libero or play the "mark and cover" game of a four in line defence. Intelligent, determined and no mean performer on the ball Axelsson is a key man, the cornerstone of the Swedish rearguard.

In attack the regular front three are all **foreign** stars . . . Ove Grahn, on the right wing, Ove Kindvall in the middle and Glasgow Rangers's Orjan Persson on the left flank from where he glides up and down the line, weaving past opponents in the old Tom Finney style, shuffling the ball and changing feet . . . Persson is a "ghost," an opponent who is almost impossible to mark because he has the priceless ability to suddenly "disappear" and pop up moments later in the critical spot. But in attack the real star is Ove Kindvall.

Scoring goals is Kindvall's trade and his success in this field is emphasised in figures: scorer of half Sweden's World Cup goals even though he didn't play in all the games and equal top scorer last season (1968-69) in Holland and with 30 goals from a maximum 34 matches and helping his club Feijenoord to a Cup and League double. Wanting to return home in the summer of 1969, he was persuaded to stay on for a crack at the European Cup. Stocky, quick and aggressive Kindvall is full of running and shooting power and a master of what the English have come to call "near-post running."

Probable party:

Goalkeepers: Ronnie Hellstrom (Hammarby), Ronney Pettersson (Djurgaarden) and Sven-Gunnar Larsson (Orebro).

Defenders: Hans Selander (Halsingborg), Kurt Axelsson (FC Bruges), Bjorn Nordqvist (IFK Norrkoping), Jan Karlsson (Jonkoping) and Roland Grip (AIK).

Midfield: Thomas Svensson (Oster IFK), Bo Larsson (Malmo FF), Leif Eriksson (Orebro), Jan Olsson (Atvidaberg, and Jan Niklasson (IFK Goteborg).

Front players: Roger Magnusson (Marseille), Thomas Nordahl (RSC Anderlecht), Ove Kindvall (Feijenoord), Ove Grahn (Grasshoppers), Orjan Persson (Glasgow Rangers), Tommy Turesson (FC Bruges), Ove Eklund (Atvidaberg).

ERIC WEIL reports

BOCA JUNIORS QUALIFY . . .

ARGENTINA

BOCA Juniors national championship win has done much for Argentine soccer—not only because they are the most popular club in the country—gate takings were 36 per cent higher than those of River Plate, the runners-up in the gates table—and it helped Argentine fans to get over the blow of elimination from the World Cup. More important is that Boca did it by returning to attacking soccer. Successful teams are always copied and Argentine soccer may now soon get back to the stage where ball play takes the place of destructive tactics again.

I said last season that Boca Juniors was a team well organised in defence with a sound rearguard of Rogel, Melendez, Suñe and Marzolini, and that as soon as they improved their attack they would go to top. For this season they engaged as coach, Alfredo Di Stefano, the former Argentine international centre-forward who played for Huracan and River Plate here before going to Real de Madrid. Di Stefano, a great believer in attacking soccer, left the defence unchanged, but altered Boca's 4-3-3 system to 4-2-4 with two orthodox wingers and gave the halves more of an attacking role. To do this, he sold Gonzalez and left out the ageing Rattin after the first part of the season, bringing in younger halves in the brilliant Madurga and Medina.

ORLANDO of Boca Juniors.

Boca had no real wingers on the staff when Di Stefano took over and although Coch and Villagra were bought for the job, youngsters Ponce and Peña, from the reserves, eventually took over. Boca's reserve strength is a factor to be reckoned with. They used 23 players during the whole season but their stars of the Metropolitan First Division (in which they went out in the semi-final to River Plate on goal average), such as goalkeeper Antonio Roma—who set up a new First Division record in keeping his goal intact for 782 minutes—half Cabrera and forwards Pianetti and Novello were replaced in the National Championship when half Madurga and forwards Peña and Rojas shone.

SAVED MANY POINTS

Young Sanchez, already an international, replaced Roma in goal, but the four-man defence shone all year and was unchanged. There was a scare when Peruvian, Melendez, the best of the lot, was in danger of needing an operation. The team had its fair crop of injuries, but changes made little difference. They had their bad patches in both championships, but the defence never let them down and saved many points.

Boca's strong points are the continual rotation between halves and forwards which often surprises defences and beats off-side traps. Half Madurga, among the leading scorers, is an expert at this. Defenders all try and take the ball out of defence, even to the opposing goal and Suñe is a prolific scorer. Players group together and keep the ball away from the opposition by quick inter-passing. When Boca has possession they continually look for openings and forget about marking.

All the players can score and do. Forward Angel Rojas was the season's top scorer with 14 goals, but goals were shared so that although Boca was 1969's top team, none of their players were among the ten leading scorers.

Rivals may find it difficult to find a way past Boca's defence, but they can make it difficult for Boca by putting a lot of players with ball control in mid-field and like the Brazilians, Boca don't mark to closely because they don't like being marked themselves. Strangely, they put up their worst performances this season against enthusiastic semi-professional teams from the provinces.

Their record during 1969:

	P	W	D	L	Gf.	Ga.
Metropolitan Championship	23	12	7	4	34	11
Argentine Cup	10	7	1	2	22	9
National Championship	17	13	3	1	35	11

This soccer-playing team, which prefers to construct rather than destruct like most other Argentine teams at the moment, should do well in the South American Cup, but coach Di Stefano returned to Madrid for family reasons right after the last game and has not yet re-signed for next season. It remains to be seen what Boca Juniors will do and how they will play under a successor.

RIVER PLATE THE RUNNERS-UP

River Plate beat San Lorenzo in the second place play-off of the National Championship to win a place in the South American Cup. They are not such a solid side as Boca Juniors, have given many unconvincing displays, but who can dispute their record of being unbeaten in their last 18 games.

River Plate had qualified (as runners-up) for the South American Cup last year, but didn't take part due to disagreement over fixtures. Having qualified for this cup, they were not drawn for the Argentine Cup and their record in the two league tournaments was:

	P	W	D	L	Gf.	Ga.
Metropolitan Championship	24	12	8	4	36	25
National Championship	19	13	5	1	38	13

Their current team is considered worse than those of recent years, runners-up on numerous occasions. Their enthusiasm and strong play made up for a lot of deficiencies, but they had 11 players sent off during the year. Their international forwards, Daniel Onega and Oscar Mas, provided the classical touch and the goals. Winger Mas played in every game and was leading scorer with 24. Onega was a regular until his suspension for the last vital games. He played 36, scored 18.

COACHES MOVE AROUND

Close season transfer activity hasn't got into full swing yet, but the game of musical chairs between managers, or "technical directors" as they are called here, has started.

Jose Pizzuti, who took Racing to the "world championship" in 1967, has been named national team manager. Humberto Maschio, the ex-Racing player who was in charge of the national team until shortly before the World Cup preliminary games, has taken over as "D.T." at Racing. Adolfo Pedernera, in charge of the national team for the World Cup games, left Independiente, following a disagreement over bonus money and has taken over at Huracan. Independiente are trying to get back Manuel Giudice.

TROUBLE IN URUGUAY

SOUTH AMERICA

ALL the ballyhoo surrounding Pele's 1,000th goal couldn't hide the fact that his club, Santos, has just had one of its worst seasons. As usual, they played a lot, but this year achieved little. They won the San Paulo Championship, their league, but only on goal average in the final round, and they didn't stand out as usual. Then they went on a foreign tour and didn't return in time for the start of the Brazilian national championship, the "Gomes Pedroza" Cup. On their return they played two or three games a week to catch up their fixtures, but couldn't pick up more than 50 per cent of the points.

They ended the year by playing in the Super Cup Tournament, for Inter-Continental Cup winners, and lost four games on the run within 11 days — an unusual "feat" for this club which put it into the month's "South American Scene".

By the time they won their next game in this tournament, beating Peñarol 2-0 on December 11, they had played 73 serious games during 1969, scoring 153 goals against 95. Apart from this, Santos had as many as nine and never less than six men in the national team squad.

In 1961, perhaps their best year, Santos played most games — 94, scored 338 goals and conceded 137. The comparison is interesting (3.59 goals per game against last year's 2.12), although the quality of the opposition could have had a lot to do with it.

WORTHY SUCCESSORS

Santos has to play so many games to pay its way and be able to keep their expensive players, but they must also be able to remain at the top to be able to earn that kind of money. The Brazilian press is right in saying that Santos urgently needs a goalkeeper, centre-forward, right-wing and half, some good reserves and more intelligent fixture-making to be able to maintain their place. They can't be expected to do it by playing an average of 80 serious games a year with a lot of travelling in between.

Santos's most urgent need during their four-game losing streak was a goalkeeper as neither Jair nor Aguinaldo filled the bill. After unsuccessfully trying to sign Argentine international goalkeeper, Cejas, from Racing Club, they had to make do with Joel from Brazilian team Curitiba. But Pele also needs a capable partner now that Coutinho is overweight and past his best, and Toninho, a worthy successor, has been transferred. Luis Carlos nor Edú fill the bill in the middle, while Douglas has not fulfilled his early promise.

The mid-field, where Mengalvio and Zito used to be the masters, does not give the attack the same service as before and the defence, with veteran Argentine ex-international, Ramos Delgado still an important man, needs tightening up. But Santos still play the attractive attacking soccer which makes them stand out in an era of defensive dominance.

Forty-six-year-old Antoninho Fernandes, a former Santos player, is "technical director" now, but he has little opportunity to do much. With the team playing and travelling so much, they do virtually no training. Fernandes speaks to the players privately, does not maintain strict discipline for the same reasons and lets the players—which he calls one happy family—look after themselves and each other.

On January 16 Santos started the year with a fixture versus the Argentine champions, Boca Juniors, at Mar del Plata (Argentina). From there they went to Santiago de Chile for an international club tournament—and this is the close season in South America.

TROUBLED URUGUAY

Nacional and Peñarol, champions and vice-champions of Uruguay respectively, almost stayed out of this year's South American Club Championship, the "Libertadores" Cup, because the smaller clubs, forming the majority, vetoed their entry.

The small clubs had petitioned the F.A. a few months ago to modify the relegation system, to obtain higher financial benefits for them from the big clubs' participation in international tournaments and increase the First Division from 11 to 14 clubs. Nacional and Peñarol had blocked these proposals so the small clubs took their revenge.

Temporary peace was restored when it was agreed to study the proposals and the Nacional-Peñarol entries went in after being granted a six-day extension to the dead-line.

Nacional and Peñarol hold the upper-hand, however. The small clubs couldn't live without them. What keeps them going are the big gates when playing against the big two, the percentage from international games in most of which Peñarol and Nacional are involved and the occasional sale of players to them.

Attendances went up this season to the benefit of all, but this would soon change if the big two decided to put reserve teams into league games and not buy any more players from the small clubs. Nacional and Peñarol can also refuse to release their players for international duty and wreck Uruguay's chances. This has been done before.

This season's champions, Nacional, suffered their first league defeat in their last game versus River Plate (3-2), but they had already won the title before and gave leave to their Brazilian coach, "Zeze" Moreira, and their foreign players Manga (Braz.), Celio (Braz.), Prieto (Chile) and Artime (Arg.) — the league top scorer with 24 — to allow them to get home for Christmas.

Coach "Zeze" Moreira has decided not to come back and it must have been home-sickness as he signed on with San Paulo at a much lower salary. Nacional immediately replaced him with their former player, Enrique Fernandez, a controversial figure, who has coached with varied success in Spain, Portugal and Argentina.

A press ballot made Chilean Elias Figueroa (Peñarol) and Argentinian Luis Artime (Nacional), 1969's outstanding players of the Uruguayan championship, but on December 29, the equivalent of April Fool's Day in South America, Uruguayan fans were up in arms after reading headlines that Nacional would be deprived of the championship because Artime had not been properly registered, but it was all a joke.

"LIBERTADORES" CUP DRAW

The draw for the "Libertadores" Cup, the South American Club Championship, held at Lima, Peru, in January, had its last minute hitches as usual. Clubs from Brazil, Uruguay and Venezuela were going to stay out of the competition. Brazil's because the country wanted to concentrate entirely on the World Cup, Uruguay's for reasons stated above and Venezuela's because the Professional League, which suspended its tournament last November due to a disagreement with the F.A., refused to enter its clubs. In the end, following a postponement of the dead-line date for entries, only Brazil stayed out and it appears that Venezuela's entrants, Deportivo Galicia and Valencia, may break away to form a new league.

The draw resulted as follows:

Group 1: River Plate and Boca Juniors (Argentina), Bolivian teams to be decided. **Group 2:** Nacional and Peñarol (Uruguay), Deportivo Galicia, Valencia (Venezuela). **Group 3:** Guarani and Olimpia (Paraguay), Universidad de Chile, Rangers de Talca (Chile), Colombian clubs to be decided. **Group 4:** America and Liga Deportiva Universitaria (Ecuador), Universitario de Deportes and Defensor de Arica (Peru).

Teams in each group play each other home and away between February 15 and April 5. The top two in each group then go on to the next stage of the competition.

For the first time this year a Cup Winners Cup will also be played, but as I mentioned before, very few South American countries have a cup competition. In Brazil the cup is the only national tournament (league being regional) and the finalists usually went into the "Libertadores" Cup.

The Uruguayan Cup, held for the first time, was won by small club Rampla Juniors, while Peñarol and Nacional had international engagements and gave it relative importance.

River Plate v. Boca Juniors

NORMAN CUTLER *from Spain*

THE importation of foreign players and reforms in the Presidential election system were the most important items debated at the Football Association of Spain's end-of-year meeting. No final decisions were reached but general lines for further discussion were laid down.

These two loaded subjects are dimetrically opposite. Importation, if adopted, is a backward step. Electoral reforms are necessary and urgent in view of the recent anomalies at the elections in Barcelona and Mallorca.

On foreign players opinion is divided. The public, anxious for new faces, are in favour . . . the rich clubs go along with it enthusiastically . . . the poorer clubs are definitely against.

Arguments in favour of the "Open Door" are shown to be varied.

"It is generally accepted that the standard of Spanish football is at a low level. Introduction of new blood, specifically foreigners of category, will make a great contribution and revitalise our decaying football."—D. Antonio Gonzalez (President of Coruna).

SPECTACLE

"To prohibit foreigners is absurd. It encourages 'contrabando' (under-the-counter acquisitions)." — D. Jacinto Saldise (President of Osasuna).

"Football is a spectacle . . . foreigners will attract the crowds. They will also bring new ideas, help to develop and rejuvenate the game."—D. Alfonso Uson (President of Zaragoza).

"Why not?" asks D. Santiago Bernabeu (President of Real Madrid).

Opponents of the idea say: "We can revitalise our own football. There are many great football nurseries in Spain that have never been tapped and developed." — D. Jose Luis Orbegozo (President of Real Sociedad).

"Why import? Why not develop our own untouched resources? — D. Felix Oraa (President of Atletico Bilbao).

And several others say, in effect: "Spanish football for the Spaniards."

ENFORCED

Those in favour make one proviso (an escape clause, I feel) . . . that strict measures must be adopted—and enforced—to ensure the entry of only top-class foreigners, those possessing new ideas and those able to contribute to the raising the level of Spanish football.

That is a very laudable qualification. But what enforceable regulations can be formulated? How can measures be guaranteed and by whom? The growing contingent of football agents?

In Barcelona circles, names like George Best, Frances Lee, Rivera and Riva are being loosely bandied about. Very nice, too . . . for they are the class of player Spain needs. But who has the persuasive powers, the money and the guarantees to attract such players? I'm sure George Best wouldn't leave United and acquire dual-nationality in order to play for Spain, in spite of being in love with the country from a holiday point of view. As an Irishman, even a luke warm one international gamewise, such a proposition would reach first base.

AMANCIO. (NC)

A complete "open door" — or the suggested two foreigners for First Division clubs and one for Second Division—would be amply justified if the only purpose is to provide a spectacle and to attract crowds. It will undoubtedly favour clubs like Real Madrid and Company, and may even enable them to gain another stranglehold on the European Cup. It may even make Spanish clubs among the best in Europe.

But would it help Spanish football, the level of its game in general . . . or only those clubs able to afford importations? Would it help Third Division and Regional football, and the nursery areas of Spain from which the future will, or should, be drawn?

WORN-OUT

In any case how would it help if a player like Bobby Charlton was acquired and forced to adjust himself to the old, worn-out methods of present-day managers?

Look back a little! During the previous "free" importation era (prior to the Chile World Cup) Real Madrid with Puskas, Di Stefano, Rial, Kopa, Santamaria and others in the side were world beaters. Barcelona were pretty powerful for a while with Kubala, Koscis, Czibor, etc. It definitely brought prestige to these clubs.

Yet it failed dismally to elevate the general standard of play. Spain were never able to produce a great international side

Close marking! Seven Sabadell defenders marking Ernesto Dominguez (Real Mallorca). And they had good reason. Dominguez is Spain's second leading scorer. (NC)

FOREIGNERS—YES OR NO?

even with the nationalised Di Stefano, Rial and Puskas available. And it produced the invidious "Big Four" who dominated the domestic scene to the detriment of clubs unable to afford such purchases. The experiment never benefited Spain then, why should it be any different ten years later?

Ladislav Kubala, the International side manager, has the right idea . . . develop the youth.

I'm merely making observations. *But I believe the state of the game in Spain is BECAUSE of the continual importation of foreign players.*

On the other hand the acquisition of top-class managers, coaches and trainers would help a great deal. They would bring new ideas, tactics, methods of training, discipline and thinking that would definitely revitalize and change the face of the game.

The proof is for everyone to see. Ronnie Allen revolutionised Atletico Bilbao, Max Merkel (Austrian) reformed Seville, and Frenchman Marcel Domingo has rebuilt Atletico Madrid . . . all in six months. Such great technicians, stricter discipline, and development through the formation of second and third teams for each club (now prohibited) would, I'm sure, produce within two or three years the desired results.

FIGUREHEAD

The other problem the Football Association of Spain—who have the patience of Job and the wisdom of Solomon—are facing is the method of electing club presidents.

You may ask: What's so important about Presidents? A fair enough question. In England, and other countries, the President is usually a figurehead. In Spain, because few clubs are limited companies, the President is all-important and all-powerful.

He, and the board he selects, guarantees the economy and often dig deep into their own pockets. He discovers and signs players . . . gives interviews . . . arranges transfers . . . and in fact actively runs the club. As such he is the most important figure. If the club is successful *he* is lauded (rarely the manager and players) . . . if it slips, he resigns (generally after trying several managers). It's a spot nearly as hot as the manager's hot seat.

The continual change of Presidents, the behind-the-scene machinations, and the unsatisfactory method of election is seriously worrying the Football Association.

The president is elected by a doubtful "democratic" method. According to the number of members (qualified by four years continual membership) *compromisos* (representatives) are drawn by lottery to represent a specific number of members. These 100 or 200, together with ex-Presidents, ex-first Vice-Presidents and the six oldest members, elect the President by secret ballot.

The weakness can be seen at once. The *compromisos* are in theory supposed to be representative of the membership. But in fact the fate of the club and presidential candidates, depend entirely on the luck of the draw. You might have two candidates —one brilliant and exceptional, the other ambitious but completely ignorant of the game and club. Yet the wrong man is chosen simply because the names drawn from the urn happen to be his friends, business associates, etc. The *compromisos* can hardly be representative, anyway, simply because he only has one vote and cannot allocate that vote according to the number of members who wish to vote for one or the other candidate.

ANOMALIES

The Barcelona vote went completely contrary to public (50,000 fervent supporters each match) opinion. The Mallorcan election, although the popular candidate succeeded, produced anomalies such as dead members (through inaccurate records) being elected as *compromisos* . . . alleged falsification of signatures . . . and other strange methods of electioneering.

PIRRI. (NC)

These then are the issues that face the Football Association President, D. Jose Luis Costa, and his Executive Committee.

★

And reverting to the importation of foreign players. Who would you suggest are the main importers . . . or have been?

Study this list of 25 year signings: 1944 Bordallo (Mexico); 1947 Navarro (Argentine); 1948 Rocha (Argentine) and Watson (English); 1950 Luciano and Hon (French); 1951 Imbelloni and Olsen (Argentine); 1953 Di Stefano, Britos and Rodriguez (Argentine); 1954 Rial (Argentine); 1956 Kopa (French); 1957 Szabo (Hungary), Dominguez (Argentine) and Santamaria (Uruguay); 1958 Puskas (Hungary) and Ramos (Uruguay); 1959 Didi and Canario (Brazil) and Kaszas (Hungary); 1960 Simonsson (Sweden); 1963 Muller (French), Evarista (Brazil) and Daucik (Czechoslovakia); 1965 Goywaerts (Belgium), Aguero (Argentine); 1966 Miguel Perez (Argentine), and 1969 Fleitas (Paraguay).

You must have guessed. The millionaire club . . . Real Madrid.

★

Spanish football is still trying to recover from the sensational 5-0 defeat . . . I repeat 5-0 . . . of Real Madrid by Atletico Bilbao.

No one could believe it when the news broke. In fact three foreign news agencies, one English and two Italian . . . telephoned Madrid for confirmation after receiving the news on the ticker tape.

Before the match, Miguel Munoz, Real Madrid's long serving manager said: "Defeat won't effect our championship chances." Afterwards he said: "Atletico Bilbao will be champions."

Ronnie Allen? "Real are a first class team. They are always good. I liked them before, I like them now."

And to pile on the agony this was Real's heaviest defeat for 17 years (they lost 0-6 to Malaga in March 1953) . . . and the first time they have lost in Bilbao for five years.

The Bilbao ground record was broken . . . 50,500 packed into San Mames which holds 45,000 . . . and many of the public paid £40 for a 30/- stand seat.

Repercussions? I think they will be more sensational than the result of the match.

Yakimov scores for CSKA in a Bulgarian league match. (AT)

BULGARIA WINTER VACATION

report from
A. TANIELIAN

AFTER concluding successfully the World Cup preliminary matches, as well as the 1969 autumn half season, it is given winter vacation to the footballers. They will be on the field again about mid-January, however not to play formal matches, but to start active period of training and other preparations in view to the next spring busy season, which will start on March 8.

Most club players then will spend about four weeks in winter resorts, particularly in Pamporovo—one of the best Bulgarian winter resorts in the Rodopa Mountain. The internationals are foreseen to assemble in the same time, too, whereas their camp will be in one of the highest mountains—the Pirin mountain—in a height on the level of Mexico. Dr. S. Bojkov, senior coach, has called on the following players: Simeonov, Filipov, Shalamanov, Gaydarski, Dimitrov (I.), Kolev (B.), Penev, Jechev, Aladjov, Gaganelov, Bonev, Kolev (T.), Nikodimov, Yakimov, Mikhailov (A.), Dermendjiev, Marashliev, Marinov, Asparukhov, Petkov. Under club's coach observation are also: Davidov, Jekov, Mitkov, Kotkov, Kotsev, Panov, Grigorov, Veselinov, Popov, Gherghiev.

Programme

In the Pirin camp "Belmeken" they will spend about three weeks carrying out a special programme of training and other preparations with regard to the World Cup Mexico Finals. About February 4 they will leave for a 20-day trip to Mexico and Peru, where they will play a couple of matches, to be home again before March 8, when the League Championship will continue.

The cup matches will be played earlier without the participation of the internationals. In the same period it is planned to be played also a friendly match with the national team of Greece or Switzerland. Today was announced that a friendly match with the national team of France is arranged also, to be played on April 8 in Paris. From April 28 to May 10 Dr. Bojkov and his assistant Arsov, will renew their work with the internationals in a high mountain, while in the same period there will be played two test matches as well. About May 12 they will leave for Mexico to reach the town where they will play their matches. They will have time to play there some matches too before starting the Finals.

The programme chartered by the FF and the Bulgarian Union of Physical Culture and Sports has the task to improve the physical and psychological condition of the players as well as the skill of play so that Bulgaria reach at least the quarter-finals.

The top footballer for 1969 was pointed out Hristo Bonev, link-man or inside, Lokomotiv and international. He showed best play in this period, particularly with the international team when playing the matches for the World Cup preliminaries, scoring four goals. Top scorer for the semi-season is again P. Jekov.

Removed

Before ending 1969, A. Shalamanov and A. Mikhailov, both of JSC Slavia and internationals, were removed from play in their club team and the international, too, for an unsettled period, in spite of breaking disciplinary normes. It is to remind, that this is the second serious punishment of Mikhailov, who in consequence of unfair behaviour in the 1968 Mexico Olympic Final, was deprived of playing one year from the international team and that FIFA had removed last summer the punishment ahead of term to give him possibility to progress as a young and promising player.

To give possibility to boys about ten to play football and to compete, there was founded a new category of footballers here called "Micky Mouse". The first tournament was held in the season just passed.

WORLD SOCCER SCANNER

IN West Germany the first reaction to the World Cup draw was one of relief. Grouped with the South American outsiders Peru, plus Bulgaria whom they recently defeated 1-0 on their own ground in Sofia, as well as modest Morocco — beaten 5-1 at Karlsruhe three years ago—the general opinion is that a quarter-final place should be well within the reach of this country. After all the Germans boast the second best overall record, next to Brazil, of any nation in the World Cup.

Looking beyond the preliminary stage the task appears infinitely tougher, for West Germany would then oppose the winners or runners-up from Group 3: Either Brazil, England or Czechoslovakia. The ever-so-cautious national manager, Helmut Schön, has already aired his feelings on that subject when he said immediately after the draw in Mexico City: "I was under no illusions and expected the worst, but I know that no team must be taken lightly. We are pleased to be playing in Leon, where we found very good accommodation. It would be nice to win this group in which case we could again play in Leon. But whatever happens the opposition will be tough, for we must reckon with either England or Brazil."

The German team may not be quite as thoroughly prepared as in the past, and certainly less than many foreign commentators imagine. With the advent of professional football the Bundesliga clubs are having more say regarding the release of players than ever before.

Most of the clubs were not satisfied with the 3,000 D. Marks (£300) they received from the DFB for each player taking part in the World Cup qualifying games. Only after a long battle did the FA manage to persuade the clubs to allow two further internationals to be played before Mexico in addition to those two already arranged.

Now the first test will be against Spain in Seville on February 11. Next opponents on April 8 have not yet been confirmed. On May 9, against Northern Ireland, and May 13 v. Yugoslavia. Departure for Mexico, unusually late, is scheduled for May 20.

In addition, Schön hopes for several training stints. For the first of these he called the following 25 players for a three-day course at Frankfurt at the end of January: Goalkeepers: Horst Wolter (Eintracht Brunswick), Josef Maier (Bayern Munich) and Manfred Manglitz (Cologne). Defenders: Bernd Patzke (Hertha Berlin), Horst Höttges (Werder Bremen), Max Lorenz (Eintracht Brunswick), Willi Schulz (Hamburger SV), Wolfgang Weber (Cologne), Bertie Vogts, Klaus Sieloff, Ludwig Müller (all Bor. Mönchen-Gladbach) and Klaus Fichtel (Schalke). Midfield and forwards: Lorenz Horr (Hertha) Siegfried Held and Wilhelm Neuberger (both Bor. Dortmund), Jürgen Grabowski (Eintracht Frankfurt), Uwe Seeler (Hamburger SV), Wolfgang Overath (Cologne), Günter Netzer, Herbert Laumen, Peter Dietrich (all Bor. Mönchen-Gladbach), Franz Beckenbauer, Gerd Müller (both Bayern), Reinhard Libuda (Schalke) and Josef Heynckes (Hanover). This pre-World Cup squad will eventually also include Helmut Haller (Juventus) and Karl-Heinz Schnellinger (AC Milan).

According to the half-yearly ratings, issued by the **Kicker/sport** magazine, the Germans claim the following players as "world class": Vogts, Beckenbauer, Schulz and Overath. Under "international class" they list: Manglitz, Maier, Wolter, Höttges, Patzke, Fichtel, L. Müller, Netzer, Libuda, G. Müller, Seeler and Held.

On the domestic scene, the bad weather has caused wholesale cancellations of Cup and League matches. In the first round proper of the DFB Cup, in which the Bundesliga clubs made their

W. GERMANY PLEASED WITH DRAW

report from
ARTHUR ROTMIL

entry, only seven out of the 16 scheduled games could be played. Three Regional-Liga teams put out fancied opponents from the upper sphere: FC Nürnberg delighted a 25,000 crowd by defeating VfB Stuttgart 1-0, thanks to an 83rd-minute goal by substitute Lehr. Jahn Regensburg also advanced with a late header from Mattes (82 minutes) which eliminated Eintracht Brunswick 1-0. More decisive was Kickers Offenbach's 4-1 triumph over 1860 Munich, while League leaders Borussia Mönchen-Gladbach had more trouble than expected before overcoming Eintracht Gelsenkirchen, who are now an amateur club following their enforced relegation from the Regional-Liga West for disciplinary reasons.

Threatened by a pile-up of fixtures the DFB has decided to postpone the semi-finals and the Cup final until August. But should the Bundesliga programme suffer further cancellations, then it may even be necessary to defer earlier rounds of the Cup till the start of next season! Whatever happens, the Bundesliga campaign will end on May 2, in view of the national side's departure for the Mexico World Cup.

The only Bundesliga manager who has served the same club since the League was formed on August 24, 1963, Helmut Johannsen, is leaving Eintracht Brunswick at the end of this term. Both parties agreed to terminate his seven-year contract in friendly and amicable fashion. Borussia Mönchen-Gladbach also have the same boss, Hennes Weisweiler, but they did not enter the League until 1965. Altogether, 56 managers have now left their clubs in the 6½ years of Bundesliga existence. The first to go by the wcy was Herbert Widmayer of Nürnberg when the League was 68 days old! Another manager in the news is Bernd Trautmann—the former Manchester City goalkeeper and England's "Footballer of the Year" in 1956—who has just been relieved of his duties by Regional-Liga club Opel Rüsselsheim.

The luckiest manager is undoubtedly "Tschik" Cajkovski, sacked recently by Hanover, who paid him £4,250 in lieu of completion of contract. Now he has taken over Kickers Offenbach," at least till the end of the season. If they win promotion then Cajkovski will collect a fat bonus. Another managerial change is about to materialise at Hamburger SV, who are engaging 30-year-old Klaus Ochs—their sixth coach in as many years—as a replacement for Georg Knöpfle, who is retiring at the end of this term.

Not since the Bundesliga was created has the programme been so badly hit as this season. New dates must be found for 22 matches, and Bayern Munich for example are already four games in arrears. The sole consolation is the fact that most clubs have managed to cure their injured players, while those with suspensions will hardly miss any matches.

Hertha Berlin, who reached the quarter-finals of the Fairs Cup, took advantage of their rivals' inactivity and jumped into second place in the table. At the bottom 1860 Munich eased their problems and are now only one point below Alemannia Aachen.

DATELINE DIARY

● *Continued from page 11*

JANUARY 29

CURITIBA, BRAZIL: Rumania beat Curitiba 2-1 in the third of their World Cup warm-up matches. Curitiba led 1-0 at the interval thanks to Wernek (41) but goals from Dobrin (57) and Neagu (77) saved the Rumanians.

ZURICH: The draw for the quarter finals of the European Fairs Cup was made here today resulting in the following ties: Hertha Berlin v. Inter-Milan or Barcelona; Anderlecht v. Newcastle United (holders); Karl Zeiss Jena v. Ajax Amsterdam and Dinamo Bacau v. Arsenal.

TEL AVIV: Israel announced today that they will play a series of matches in Ethiopia as part of their preparations for Mexico. They are extra keen to play in Addis Ababa because the altitude is similar to Mexico City. Their two week visit will start on March 15.

JANUARY 30

LISBON: Two footballers who protected the referee when the crowd invaded the pitch during the Benfica/Belenenses match last Sunday were publicly praised by the Director General of Sports here last night. The official, Dr. Armando Rocha, gave the two players, Toni of Benfica and Belenenses' Estevao a written statement praising their action. The statement read, "Indifferent to any passions, and at the risk of being molested by a wild crowd they protected the referee (Joao Nogueira) until gaining access to the dressing rooms." In an interview with the Lisbon daily paper *Diario de Lisboa* the referee added his thanks. He said, "It is thanks to Toni that I am still alive."

TITOGRAD: Russia, continuing their World Cup preparations drew 1-1 with a Montenegrin Select side here today in the last of three friendly matches in Yugoslavia. Serebryannikov (3) opened the score; Tibljas (75) replied for the Select side. Almost 15,000 saw the game.

JANUARY 31

MELBOURNE: The touring Rumanian Representative side retained their unbeaten tag in Australia so far when they salvaged a 1-0 victory from Victoria today. The visitors were well held but Dragu Badin squeezed the winner from close range 12 minutes from time.

FEBRUARY 1

BILBAO: Real Madrid received the biggest thrashing they've had for many, many years when they were beaten 5-0 by Atletico Bilbao here tonight. Atletico have a good chance of taking Real's title for they are now level with Atletico Madrid at the top of the table. Bilbao's English manager Ronnie Allen said he wasn't surprised at the score. "We've been promising to do this to someone for some time," he said.

FEBRUARY 2

LIMA, PERU: Peru will make a four game tour of Europe in April to tune up for Mexico, their trainer Waldir Peirera said today. Peirera, much better known as the Brazilian "Didi," gave no further details. He says however that his side will meet fellow finalists Bulgaria in Lima on February 21 and February 25.

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA: Spartak Trnava continued their South American tour when they drew 1-1 with Colombia. In a hard-fought game played despite torrential rain throughout the 90 minutes, the quicker Czechs bounced through the mud and an own-goal by Caicedo gave the visitors an interval lead after 29 minutes. Campaz equalised after 67 minutes.

NAIROBI: Police separated fighting players during a match between Switzerland's Lugano and Kenya's Abaluhya club. The trouble started after half-time when Lugano centre-forward fouled Abaluhya left-half Hezekiah Ang'ana. The two players exchanged blows and all the other players quickly joined in. Play was held up for two minutes while police gained control and Lugano finally won 4-2.

FEBRUARY 3

PARIS: Sportsmen and politicians in France are preparing for a battle royal over draft law number 999 just introduced into Parliament. The new private member's bill proposes that France, like every other European country apart from Albania and Russia, should organise betting on a forecast of the weekly football or rugby results. In England it is called the Pools, in Italy the Totocalcio, in Spain the Totobola—but in France the very thought of it raises a howl of moral indignation. To organise betting on soccer, Parliament would have to repeal or circumvent a 134-year-old law which bans "All operations offered to the public, whatever they are called, giving rise to the hope of winning money by luck". But the Government itself has completely ignored this law on at least three occasions by permitting Government controlled casinos, by organising the national lottery and even more recently by setting up the highly popular tierce horse racing bet. The anti-football pools lobby is led by Corsican surgeon and sports minister Joseph Comiti, who considers gambling evil. It is estimated that a pools or similar scheme could bring in 200 million francs (15 million sterling) extra per year for sport. But the minister doesn't care. He says, "All gambling is immoral. If I had my way the tierce, the national lottery and the casinos would be banned. Earnings should be the result of honest work and gambling can lead people to sacrifice the whole of their salaries on it. It is like a drug," he recently told reporters. The bill was introduced by Independent Republican deputy Bernard Destrenau, who presents a strong argument for its inauguration. He says a football pools cannot be considered immoral because almost every country in Europe has one and that no matter what you could never stop people gambling. It would be impossible to cheat, he says, with 1,594,323 possible combinations in a forecast based on 13 selections. Prime Minister Jacques Chaban Delmas is personally in favour of the idea which would do a tremendous amount for French sport by way of financial aid. It's his decision whether or not to proceed with the idea.

Italian clubs slump badly

THE most remarkable feature of the current Fairs Cup campaign has been the continued slump of the strongly fancied Latin teams, especially those from Spain and Italy. Spanish clubs who have won six out of the first eight tournaments were all eliminated before the quarter-final stage. Inter-Milan are left alone to carry Italian hopes. By contrast, Eastern European sides like Carl Zeiss Jena and Dynamo Bacau, despite the handicap of having to play during their customary winter pause, are proving the surprise packets of the season. English teams, winners for the past two years, must once again be favoured to win this trophy. As a reminder, here are the results of the previous finals:

1955-58 (competition spread over three years) Barcelona b. London XI 2-2, 6-0.
1958-60 (competition spread over two years) Barcelona b. Birmingham City 0-0, 4-1.
1960-61 AS Roma b. Birmingham City 2-2, 2-0.
1961-62 Valencia b. Barcelona 6-2, 1-1.
1962-63 Valencia b. Dynamo Zagreb 2-1, 2-0.
1963-64 Zaragoza b. Valencia 2-1.
1964-65 Ferencvaros b. Juventus 1-0.
1965-66 Barcelona b. Zaragoza 0-1, 4-2 a.e.t.
1966-67 Dynamo Zagreb b. Leeds 0-0, 2-0.
1967-68 Leeds b. Ferencvaros 1-0, 0-0.
1968-69 Newcastle b. Ujpest Dozsa 3-0, 3-2.

Through the unfortunate Third Round draw another English side, Southampton, were forced out by their compatriots and holders Newcastle. The Saints sprang a mild surprise when they held the Geordies to a goalless draw at St. James' Park—the first team to leave that ground unbeaten in this competition. Even the falling snow, Newcastle's ally on a couple of occasions against Portuguese teams before, did not help to overcome a resolute defence. But at home, Southampton, despite territorial superiority, could only score once through Channon while Robson's 84th minute equaliser (1-1) decided the tie in Newcastle's favour under the away-goals-double rule (writes **ARTHUR ROTMIL**).

Arsenal made unexpectedly heavy weather of eliminating the modest French outfit Rouen who were then languishing next to bottom of their league. Following a goalless away draw the over-confident Arsenal besieged the Rouen goal throughout the return leg but found no way past a forest of defenders until the last minute when Sammels scored to clinch the issue 1-0.

Scottish hopes ended in this round with the dismissal of both remaining contenders. Kilmarnock lost their chance against the under-rated and internationally inexperienced Dynamo Bacau at home, where they could only manage a 1-1 draw. Mathie put the Scots ahead, but the Rumanian rearguard, with goalkeeper Ghita outstanding, prevented any additional score. Instead they hit back through Baluta and then proved vastly superior on their own ground, winning 2-0, thanks to a couple of goals from Ene Daniel, to qualify by 3-1 — the only goal they've conceded in the tournament so far.

Scotland's misery was completed by Anderlecht who disposed of Dunfermline by the narrowest margin possible—the away goals calculation! The Belgians won 1-0 (Devrindt) in Brussels and were trailing at Dunfermline before Van Himst and Mulder levelled the score-line. But even a Scottish winner to make it 3-2 was not enough.

The dark horses of this contest, East Germany's Carl Zeiss Jena, provided the biggest upset of the round by the manner and margin of their victory over last year's finalists, the redoubtable Hungarians Ujpest Dozsa.

In the second round, Jena hit the headlines through eliminating the Italian League leaders Cagliari. Now they put out the Hungarian champions and cup holders, once again without conceding a goal. Yet, nothing suggested this triumph after the first leg in East Germany when Carl Zeiss scraped through by a solitary last-minute goal from Krauss. But on an icy, snow-bound pitch in Budapest their drill and stamina proved too much for the more delicate Magyars and they won 3-0 with surprising ease.

There was a sensational ending to the tie between Holland's pride Ajax Amsterdam and the temperamental Italian side Napoli. In the notorious San Paolo stadium, Napoli (for the first time with their latest acquisition from AC Milan, in shape of the famous Swede Kurt Hamrin) won 1-0. The Dutch squared matters at home thanks to a goal by Swart and thus the overall score after 90 minutes was 1-1. At that precise moment Suurendonck came on as a substitute for Ajax. In the second period of extra-time this amazing Suurendonck hit a brilliant hat-trick in six minutes (108, 112 and 114 minutes) to give them a 4-0 victory!

Jon Sammels, scorer of the single goal that gave Arsenal victory over Rouen in the Fairs Cup. (SF)

West Germany's sole survivor, Hertha Berlin, did well to remove the last Portuguese outfit, Vitoria Setubal—the conquerors of Liverpool. Despite constant pressure Vitoria could only once break the tough German defence through Tomé. But Horr snatched an equaliser for a 1-1 draw and in Berlin, a single effort by Steffenhagen — a second half substitute! — was sufficient to see Hertha through.

The clash of the round was undoubtedly between those old rivals on and off the field, Inter-Milan and Barcelona. The Spaniards acquired a new English manager, Vic Buckingham, at a salary of £10,000 a year. According to some English papers he was "preferred" to Helenio Terrera, but what they forgot to mention was that Herrera earns with AS Roma more than ten times (!) as much, so Barcelona got Mr. Buckingham "on the cheap".

In the first leg, in Spain, Inter scored a fine 2-1 win thinks to goals from Boninsegna and Bertini with Fusté replying for the hosts. At San Siro in Milan, the Italians led by 1-0 (Boninsegna) when the game had to be abandoned because of fog, after 33 minutes play.

The biggest crowds of the round were registered for Barcelona v. Inter 80,000; Ajax v. Napoli 55,000; Newcastle v. Southampton 38,200, and Arsenal v. Rouen 38,018.

Encouraging note. Not one player was sent off in these 16 games. In the corresponding round last season there were three dismissals.

HUNGARIAN NEWS

Taught a lesson in modern soccer

LESLIE VERNON

"WE have been taught a lesson in the art of modern football," was the headline of one of Budapest's leading newspapers after Ujpesti Dozsa's humiliating home defeat against Jena in the Fairs' Cup. Admittedly, the Hungarian champions were not quite match-fit for this encounter, but the same could be said about their East German conquerors.

The first leg match at Jena was played on a snow-covered pitch, and the single goal defeat (Krauss 88 minutes) was an acceptable result. But a week later, under much better conditions, the lilac and whites were outclassed to such an extent that their own, usually placid crowd, gave them the bird. Bene missed an easy opportunity after three minutes' play, and then reserve goalkeeper, Borbely, dropped the ball—a gift gratefully accepted by Scheitler.

The "Baroti-team" panicked, realising that this "away goal" made their task very difficult. Stein scored just before the interval, and Peter Ducke made it 3-0 in the second half. A truly shattering, disastrous defeat for Dozsa on their own ground where they were considered invincible, and beat such teams as Leeds and Bruges only a few months ago. But after "Marseille" nothing surprises the public any more—Hungarian football is in a terrible state and it will need years of hard work to improve the gloomy situation.

STRONGER

Two after - match thought-provoking remarks: Roland Ducke (captain of Jena), "We haven't conceded a single goal in six Fairs Cup matches. At Izmir, we played on a sandy pitch, at Cagliari, in mud, and here, on ice, but in each case we were physically stronger than our opponents. The word "impossible" has been rubbed out of our dictionary. Hungarians, please follow our example!"

Boskov (coach of the Yugoslav team, Vojvodina): "Hungarian football is outdated, slow and a travesty of its own glorious past. We in Central Europe must wake up soon to the realities of present-day requirements, otherwise we will never be able to catch up with the rest of the world."

I have very little to add, except that it is tragic that Hungarian football has been allowed to reach a point when they have a lot to learn from the East Germans! This latest fiasco came in the middle of feverish activities concerning the entire reorganisation of the game. In place of the departed F.A. officials, three temporary committees were appointed with the specific job of dealing with various aspects of the "overhaul". Finance, training methods, the transfer system, etc., and many more etceteras were discussed by these committees, which included politicians, leaders of sporting establishments, coaches, journalists—in fact people from all walks of life. They all have one common aim—the good of the game—and their hard work should result in some beneficial reforms.

By the end of the month a brand new F.A. hierarchy will be established, and the members of the above committees will resume their previous occupations. From the various interviews published, I found certain encouraging signs, but it seems to me that the fundamental problem ("the status of the players") cannot be resolved satisfactorily. All and sundry assures us that the time for "double-talk" is over, but at the same time, they say that open professionalism is out of the question, and the players must be rewarded according to their work in training and match results. Isn't this "double talk"?

SUPERIOR

My second nagging doubt concerns the selection of the national team manager. The current favourite is Jozsef Hoffer, a dedicated man of football, who has been in charge of the youth squad for several years and has worked on the official News Agency's Sports Desk (M.T.I.) at the same time. (In fact he is the immediate superior there of Florian Albert!) Before I reflect on Hoffer's suitability, let us take a quick glance back at his predecessors.

Lajos Baroti was in the hot seat for several years. Three World Cups—semi-successes. No fireworks, but no disasters either. He was an excellent coach, but not much of a disciplinarian. After his resignation, Rudolf Illovszky took over. An ex-player, "one of the boys", Rudi was more of a friend than a boss. He tried the friendly approach, but 12 months was the limit of his endurance. Following him, Karoly Soos was lured back from East Germany. Soos did not know the players, he had been out of the country for six years. A world renowned expert with the aloofness of Ramsey seemed like an ideal combination. But Soos found the coaches and players unresponsive to his "hard-line" methods. Recognising the prevailing situation, he mellowed into a more "approachable" national team manager, which still did not bring about the required results. Then, disillusioned, his own built-in honesty and dedication made him give up the hopeless struggle. Knowing the Hungarian footballers and their mentality pretty well, I believe that the new manager's psychological approach will be vital. Which way would Hoffer go? He is liked by the players, but isn't he "to near" to them? Has he the fibre to make him a real "boss", imagination to motivate the players? We'll see, but my choice would be . . . Tommy Docherty or Didi!

The plans for the "one-season" championship are now complete. The First Division is divided into two groups of eight and the teams will play against each other inside their group on the home and away basis. At the end of the season (March 1-May 31) there will be two-legged matches between clubs which finish in the same position in their respective groups. (Group "A" champions v. Group "B" champions, etc.) There will be no relegation, but to give the clubs extra incentive, bonus points will be given to each team to be carried over into the new 70/71 autumn-spring championship. Group winners will get eight points, second placed teams seven, third placed six, and so on. The results of the play-off matches will not affect the number of bonus points. Group "A" is headed by Dozsa and Vasas, Group "B" by Ferencvaros and Honved. These last two are not the best of friends at the moment. The excellent "Fradi" sweeper, "Rest of the World" player Lajos Szucs, has decided to leave the green and whites and join the army team, Honved. Ferencvaros would not transfer him, and now, according to the rules (crazy, I think), Szucs has to wait for six months before he is allowed to play for his new club. So one of the best (if not the best) Hungarian defenders is out of competitive football for a season, at a time when there is a dearth of even average players! Seems nonsensical, doesn't it?

NEXT MONTH

SPECIAL REPORT from ISRAEL including WORLD CUP PEN PICTURES

ITALY'S LATEST GOLDEN BOY . . .

Story by
PHILIP EVANS

THE province of Varese is far to the north of Italy, almost a part of Switzerland, a narrow corridor of land sandwiched between Lake Como and Lake Maggiore. In the small town of Leggiuno on November 7, 1944, there was born in this district Italy's current footballing idol, Luigi Riva.

You don't get close to appreciating Riva's personality unless you see it in this context—the context of a country boy, one orphaned at an early age, who still prefers to spend a part of each summer close-season in the province of Varese indulging in a spot of quiet fishing, and visiting friends made in his youthful years on a thoroughly informal basis.

Look at the newspaper articles, tune into the television and radio interviews, and the main impression you will receive of Riva's personality is an extension of this theme. He is refreshingly straightforward and unassuming in his attitude towards football and in his devotion to his footballing friends. Recently he was involved in a dressing-room brawl when a director of the Fiorentina club made some pretty churlish remarks about Nene, Cagliari's Brazilian forward. It later transpired that the subject under discussion was not Nene's footballing ability but the colour of his skin, and although Riva must have been all too aware of the bad publicity that could result from such an episode it is typical that he should have thrown himself in on Nene's side.

Above all, for one who receives intensive press coverage whenever (and that is frequently) he scores a goal — whichever the team he has played for — Riva is simple and sincere in the generous acknowledgement he regularly gives to those of his team-mates who fight to make his life as a *capo-cannoniere* less difficult, and those players in opposing teams who play him fairly and without recourse to dubious tricks - in - trade. For example, Cagliari's current centre-forward, Gori, scored his first goal of the present season only in the first week in January. Even by the withered standards of Italian league scoring records, this is a low rate of striking for an accredited attacker. Yet Riva is the first to admit that it is Gori's selfless running, his willingness to harass opposing defences for 90 minutes in every game that creates the situations from which he, Riva, can benefit. And it was Riva who was the first to decry the ironic cheers that went up from the press at the fact of Gori's scoring.

Cynical

This attitude is also reflected whenever Riva puts on the blue jersey of the Italian national team. The 3-0 victory of the Italians over the East Germans in Naples last November was more important in itself to Riva than any part he personally had in the proceedings, far more important to him than the fact of his hat-trick of goals against Wales a fortnight previously. Each of the Italian players stood to gain a million lire if they won the game and assured themselves that Italy would be represented in Mexico in June, but Riva went on record as saying that he would gladly have paid the same sum before the game to be sure of Italian success. And if the cynical want to smile at that one, and point at Riva's reputed bank-balance, then at least they must acknowledge the selflessness of the sentiment he expressed.

The last time I saw Riva play, which was in Cagliari's match against Fiorentina in Florence, I was accompanied to the game by an old friend who had been a very promising young inside-forward with Spal in the early '60's and who had been forced to abandon football as a result of a serious liver complaint just on the threshold of what appeared to be a successful career. The only times he made any comment during the game were those in which Riva had the ball, and each comment appeared involuntary, a sincere acknowledgement of Riva's skill. Afterwards I asked him to define Riva's particular brand of charisma, and the point he made was a good one—namely, that whenever Riva is a part of the play, no spectator can help but become immediately involved, injected with a sudden rush of enthusiasm and expectation. Certainly this was true of the Fiorentina crowd that day. Italian football fans can often seem horrifyingly bigoted, can resent praise about any footballer who does not appear for their particular teams. Even the superbly talented players of the present Italian squad, such as Rivera, Facchetti, Mazzola and Anastasi receive stern treatment at the hands of this breed. But go into bars throughout Italy, even in the less sophisticated footballing towns of the south where bigotry runs highest, and you will hear the same phrases meeting your questions. "Riva? Fortissimo", "Il miglior attacante nel mondo", "Un fenomeno". And in the island of Sardinia, even in the northern towns such as Sassari and Nuoro, Riva is treated as a god.

Cagliari Football Club was founded by a group of local enthusiasts in 1920 and quickly found its way into the best league in Sardinian football. When, in 1925, the Sardinian leagues teams were affiliated to those of the Italian mainland, Cagliari became a member-team of the Serie C, the Third Division. For the next 40 years, Cagliari gained the reputation of being not quite good enough for the Serie B, slightly too good for the Serie C—the fight to reach the higher division was always followed by the agonising drop down a couple of seasons later. Then in the season 1963-64, Cagliari finished second in the Serie B and gained the promotion that the club had optimistically played for through the years. It is never easy to separate cause and effect when looking at a particular footballer's contribution to a team's success, but it is not irrelevant that in the summer of 1963, Cagliari had bought from the lowly third division team, Legnano, a young left-winger called Luigi Riva.

Fluid

Cagliari have been worth their place in the first division ever since they were promoted. In their first season they finished in ninth place in the championship, and although the team did only moderately well in the 1967-68 season, in the past 18 months Cagliari have established themselves as one of the best two or three teams in Italy, a side that is a neat balance of tight defence and fluid attack. The current trainer is Manlio Scopigno—"il filosofo". Scopigno has had his bad spells, like every other Italian trainer, notably the unhappy time he spent with Bologna during the season 1965-66. But at Cagliari he seems to have found his natural locale. He mixes freely with the players, defends them strenuously in interviews with the press, remains unshaken when they put on a bad performance—which is not frequently — and above all appears to worship Riva's particular talents with a devotion that is more than merely opportunist.

For one thing, Scopigno has always seen Riva as more than merely a wonderfully gifted striker. He sees him as being an all-round attacker of the highest talent, not a schemer in any real sense of the word, but at least a forward who has in addition to his poaching skills a flair for positional play and a keen eye for the openings that appear in

LUIGI RIVA.

opposing defences. Riva creates openings for his team-mates almost as often as they create them for him: the long ball that he put across the East German defence in Naples found Domenghini beautifully unmarked, in a perfect position to hammer in one of his famous drives.

But it is as a striker that Riva has made his most famous contributions to recent Italian football, and the simple fact is that he is one of the best two or three strikers in football today. Pelé, Tostao, Müller, Libuda, Magnusson, Kindvall, Van Himst —any one of these has the chance to emerge as the star of the Mexico World Cup; but Riva must know inside himself that he can capitalise most from Italy's comparatively easy qualifying games, can gain the confidence to prove himself unstoppable when the final rounds of the competition begin. He has already built up a formidable record of goals, and attracted a bulky dossier of favourable comment, Joao Saldanha, in Europe during the autumn to have an early look at some of the teams the Brazilians might have to face in Mexico thought Riva the most impressive of all the European players he saw. After the thrashing that Italy handed out to Wales early in November Dave Bowen, the Welsh manager, said of Riva that he was "a world-class striker, a formidable match-winner" and the sort of comments the East Germans made a fortnight later echoed the same sentiments.

Penchant

The statistics are extremely impressive. Italy scored ten goals in their four qualifying games for the present World Cup trophy—seven went to Riva's name. Riva has now played 14 games for the Italian national team, and scored 16 goals. At the moment he is far ahead of any rivals, past and present, in the averages for goals per match. In the league also, Riva is the man who has a penchant for heading goal-scoring tables. In the 1966-67 season he broke a leg in an international some two-thirds of the way through the league schedule. He had still scored enough goals in the early games to ensure his place at the top of the table when the season came to a close. The following season he was edged out of top place by Pierino Prati, top scorer for AC Milan in their championship year. Last season, Riva was back at the top again, and in the aggregate of games played during the three seasons he tucked away 51 goals in just over 80 games. This season Riva has overtaken Lanerossi Vicenza's young striker, Vitali, and presently leads the tables. No bookmaker would give you good odds on Riva finishing top for the third time in the past four seasons.

The simple facts are that the presence of Riva in any game is almost guaranteed to add several thousand onto the gate, that the anxiety which sports reporters reflect in their columns whenever Riva is injured accurately reflects that of the ticket-buying public, and that Riva is one of the great entertainers of Italian football. Goals are still worth waiting for, especially when scored in the manner in which Riva is accustomed to scoring them. The No. 11 on the back of his shirt is deceptive, only a nominal guide to his position in the forward line. For both Cagliari and the Italian national team Riva plays as a roving striker, a wonderful opportunist anywhere near the opposing goal, one whose sharp-shooting is devastatingly hard and whose acrobatics are unbelievably spectacular. In a recent league game against Lanerossi Vicenza—inevitably billed by the press as the meeting of the two moveable objects, Riva and Vitali—Riva scored a goal that almost defied description: a fluently acrobatic bicycle kick executed several feet above ground level that sent the ball fearsomely hard straight through a posse of Lanerossi defenders and into the net. And the examples of this type of goal are too numerous in Riva's book to be fully catalogued.

It is almost frightening to think that each of Riva's pounds in avoirdupois terms is worth something in the region of 5,000 pounds sterling. But it is not the least bit unlikely that one of the big three northern clubs will offer the equivalent of a million pounds for Riva during the summer transfer scramble. Whether Cagliari have the courage to sell him remains doubtful, and in any case there is little chance of Riva trying to put pressure on the club to let him go. He is happy with Cagliari, he is treated with royal deference throughout Sardinia, and his relationship with Scopigno is fine. Above all, the intricacies of the Italian football market must be secondary in his mind to the importance of helping Italy in a successful showing in Mexico. Riva is already contemplating one sacrifice: he always smokes heavily after one game and through until a day or two before the next. He is trying to give up smoking in order to be on top physical form by May, knowing too well the strain of having to play vigorously at the altitudes he will find himself at.

There is every likelihood that Riva will emerge from the Mexico tournament as one of the heroes. His brand of sharp-shooting should be devastatingly effective in Mexico's light air. The teams drawn against Italy will have received the message, and cannot but be unhappy at having to find an answer to it. Given the support he can reasonably expect from players such as Anastasi, Mazzola, Domenghini and Prati, Riva should be able to find enough time to wreak considerable damage. But if the World Cup is likely to be the pinnacle of his achievement as a footballer, Riva is not likely to forget that next year's European Cup championship is well within Cagliari's grasp. Either way, it seems certain that Riva's name will be linked with those of the great strikers of the past. And either way, one thing is sure. That Riva will continue to be unassuming and modest, at heart a country boy made good in the vicious world of big money, short memories and cheap loyalties.

BRAZIL YET TO IMPRESS

by ERIC BATTY

ONE of the most popular ideas of the moment it seems is that Brazil have learned the lessons of 1966, modernised their game and are all set to stage a really serious bid for the 1970 World Cup—the Mundial as it is known in Mexico.

Certainly I am pleased to see Brasilia amongst the qualifiers—and undoubtedly they will be far more popular all over the world than Argentina, who have been busily copying the European style of play, and have been kicking lumps off each other for several years past.

But Brazil, for all their popularity and the undoubted class and genius of Edson Arantes do Nascimento have yet to prove themselves to me. More gullible critics than I have assumed that because Brazil beat Venezuela, Colombia and Paraguay in the qualifying rounds, winning all six games for a goals tally of 23 for and only two against, that this automatically and at once puts them back in business.

I will accept the very valid point that the players' morale has improved since former Botafogo boss and ex-journalist Joao Saldanha has taken over. I'll also take into account the fact that since I saw them last Pelé has changed his mind about appearing in the Mundial and that when I last observed them in the flesh during the summer of 1968, the presence of Pelé would have made a tremendous difference. But I cannot agree that the Brazilians have modified their game for the fans of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo have always regarded football as we look upon a circus—an arena in which talented jugglers show off their unusual skills. This, I am convinced, has not changed and will not change for some time yet.

Let us sit down quietly without any fuss and consider the evidence. Last year under Aimore Moreira, a Brazilian squad without Pelé toured Europe with only mixed success. The greater part of Saldanha's squad were included in that touring party which did very little to impress me.

As I saw that squad they had a very good left-back, Rildo, whom I liked the first time I saw him some years ago at Wembley; a more than useful centre-forward in Tostao, who has come on still further since I saw him if all I hear is true, and a talented but otherwise lacking left-winger in Edu from Santos. Tostao has been having eye trouble, however, and Rildo has been omitted from the list of 22 probables.

On the debit side they had a real problem in goal; a right-back, Carlos Alberto, who was keen on copying the European backs by moving upfield to demonstrate his considerable skill, but not so keen on the hard sprinting required to get himself goal-side of the ball when Brazil's attacking moves broke down. In addition to this they had a grossly overrated midfield pair in Gerson and Rivelino; talented yes, but so eager to show off their ball skill they seldom bothered to look about and play off the first-time ball which has become a cornerstone of the modern game. Over and above all this, and still the biggest problem of all they had absolutely no cover or depth in their defence.

Intelligent

Over and above all this it should be stated that they also had a young and talented right-winger in Natal (from Belo Horizonte), whose intelligent distribution and running off the ball proved conclusively that there is at least one real coach working in Brazil. But strangely enough this young man has been conspicuously absent from Brazil's team since Moreira lost control. Looking into these problems a little more deeply, Saldanha brought back Gylmar, a superb 'keeper in his day, to earn his 100th cap and help beat England 2-1 last June. But England that day, through injury or whatever, fielded a very unbalanced team which included an attack of Ball, Bell, Bobby Charlton, Hurst and Peters. Four of these five—Hurst being the lone exception—are natural midfield players and on this score alone I suggest that England were far below their best that day. Again, Gylmar has not been recalled since then, and I very much doubt if Saldanha has solved his goalkeeper problem. We will not know the truth of that suggestion (and neither will Saldanha himself) until Felix, Claudio or the newcomers Ado and Leao or whoever it is the Brazilians have between the sticks, test him against stiff European opposition which challenges for what we term the "fight" ball hit haphazardly into the box. Then, and only then, shall we all discover whether or not Saldanha has managed to adequately replace Gylmar dos Santos Neves.

The 'keeper apart, the core of Saldanha's difficulties must revolve around the centre of his defence where even if he wanted to play an *ausputzer*, *libero* or plain "sweeper" he would have difficulty finding one who did the job regularly for his club and was therefore experienced at it. To play "behind" looks, and is, an easy job, particularly in the physical sense, for compared with other positions the sweeper has a lot less moving around to do. But though it

EUROPEAN LEAGUE REVIEW

● *Continued from page 19*

BELGIUM

WHATEVER their position in the table, Standard Liege and Anderlecht of Brussels are Belgian football . . . at least to the outside world. Anderlecht have at last thrown off their allergy to British teams by beating Dunfermline in the Fairs Cup, but their faintest of faint hopes in the championship disappeared when they lost 2-1 at Saint Tronds. Two goals by the Dutchman, Koens, settled the match, in spite of a valiant effort by Van Himst, who scored near the end.

As for Standard, they have a two-point lead over La Gantoise, who rely heavily on the Luxembourger Johnny Leonard — he played most of a match against Crossing virtually on one leg and still scored the winning goal. Standard kept their margin, nevertheless, with a significant victory over Anderlecht in Brussels. Significant, because it was their first victory there for 11 years —the last, by 2-0, occurred in the 1958–59 season.

In 1969–70, Standard at last did it again, after five defeats and five draws. They played even better than in beating Real Madrid, and Anderlecht were lucky to concede only one goal, by Takac, in the first half. Standard hit the post and bar three times, through Galic, Semmering and Depireaux; and when Galic produced a really fierce header in the 38th minute Trappeniers turned it aside with a spectacular leap. But Anderlecht never looked like scoring, and a second goal by Takac settled the match. Anderlecht failed to clear a corner, the ball bobbed around the goalmouth, and up popped Takac to bang it in.

NETHERLANDS

TWO hat-tricks by Kindvall, against DOS and DWS, enabled Feijenoord to climb above Ajax in the league table. Ajax dropped two points in draws with NEC Breda and UVV Maastricht, though the match at Maastricht was one of the best of the season.

Ajax attracted a crowd of 28,000, a ground record, to see the team in fifth place take on the team lying second. It took a brilliant save by Bals after only ten minutes to stop Mraz, of Czechoslovakia, of course, putting the home side ahead. But in the 28th minute Korver could only parry a shot from Keizer, who headed in the rebound. After half-time Ajax had a second goal disallowed for offside, and they had to be content with a point when Bonfrere scored for UVV just three minutes from time.

PELE of Santos and Brazil.

looks easy and is easy to those with the experience and the know-how, it's an awfully easy place to get caught in. One foot out of position, one tiny fraction of a second late in "reading" something, and the speed at which the game is played today is enough to destroy any player who is less than highly skilled at this game.

Qualified

When I saw Joel, the burly negro left-half (left centre-back) in 1968 he was big, intimidating and a fine header of the ball. But he was also a very awkward looking player, easily drawn and slow to cover. Joel is still there in the World Cup side that qualified and looks like being a regular choice for the Mundial. Maybe he has improved in the year since I saw him last but somehow I doubt it.

Looking back over the last 12 months—in December, 1968, Yugoslavia drew 3-3 with Brazil in Rio de Janeiro and a few days earlier West Germany had gained a 2-2 draw at the same bowl, that is, Maracana. At home to European opposition lacking adequate time to acclimatise these are not results on which World Cup hopes can be based.

Since then they did beat England . . . but in my opinion an unbalanced England, and they have qualified by winning six games in a row. But look a little further into those qualifying matches and we find that the only time the Brazilians were faced by anything like an organised, experienced defence was in their final game, at home in Maracana to Paraguay. That day, with Paraguayan 'keeper Raimundo Aguilera performing really well and his colleagues running themselves silly, Brazil could only scrape home by 1-0 and that one a rebound which Pelé popped in from around three yards.

Tostao, the young man who made his World Cup début in '66 and hit ten of the 23 qualifying goals Brazil scored, had an operation to save the use of his right eye.

Another doubt that I cannot put out of my mind is whether or not Pelé will be able to withstand the very rough handling all the world expects him to get in Mexico. Everyone he plays against will know that if they "let" him play as he can play, then he will murder them. In 1962 Pelé missed most of the series through injury and in 1966 he was literally kicked out of the World Cup. A great deal, of course, will depend on Pelé himself and his determination, but much will also depend on the attitude of the referees and the instructions they receive from above with regard to tough tackling and foul play. If it is tolerated as it was in England . . . then good-bye, Pelé, and I have serious doubts about whether or not FIFA and their chosen band of officials have the courage and the know-how to get a firm hold on things and keep tight control.

But for the answers to these questions we can only wait and see.

One final thought before I pass on to brighter points from Brazil's point of view: I cannot help feeling that a team drawn from the Cumberland town my family comes from wouldn't give Venezuela a good run, and before judging Brazilian prospects we must wait and see them over here in Europe again before we get a truly reliable guide.

Traditional

This, of course, will come because with the thoroughness which was traditional for Brazil . . . until 1966, the squad will be very seriously prepared for Mexico.

The first get-together and training session took place in early February. From this point on it is all for Brazil and club matches are forgotten. Thorough medical checks followed on all the 44 players.

Then the diary reads:

March 8: Brazil will meet a South American team in Porto Alegro.

March 15: Brazil will play against Argentina or Peru in Rio de Janeiro.

March 22: Brazil versus European opposition (preferably Russia, Hungary or West Germany) in Sao Paulo.

March 29: Brazil v. European opposition in Rio: preferably England or Scotland (no chance of these two in the season) or Czechoslovakia.

April 2: Depart for Montevideo, where Brazil will play their two regular games against Uruguay for the Copa Rio Branco,

April 6 to 11: Players released for a short holiday.

April 12: Players report back for training.

April 16 & 19: Brazil will play two games against Chile in Santiago.

April 20: The squad flies off to a special training camp in Colombia. Special, because it is situated at a similar altitude to Mexico City and there they will train for 27 days. During this time Brazil will play against Colombia (twice) and Ecuador . . . all at high altitudes.

May 18: The party flies direct from Colombia to Mexico for the final 14 days' preparation at altitude.

Obviously the CBD means business and personally I wish them well. I'd rather see the disorganised but talented Brazilians win the Copa Del Mondo than have one of the tough and nasty European teams get it. I hope they do, but I fear they won't.

BRAZIL TOP 60's LEAGUE

Feature by ANDREW DETTRE

ITALY was Europe's best team in the 1960's—if you are to believe facts and figures, while brave little Finland was the weakest.

The chart below shows all the full international results of all European teams in the 1960's. I compiled it from summaries published, over the years, by *France Football*, Hungary's *Nepsport* and, of course, WORLD SOCCER. Not very surprisingly, these records didn't always tally.

However, to introduce uniformity, I considered only the full FIFA internationals — and excluded Olympic ties, even when both countries fielded their top teams, for example.

The top five on the list will probably surprise few who are fairly familiar with international soccer. Italy, England, West Germany, the USSR and Hungary were clearly the dominant countries of the 1960's even if occasionally another one forced its way into this elite quintet, like Czechoslovakia did in 1962 and Yugoslavia, ever so briefly, in 1968.

The Italians' first place perhaps needs a bit of explanation. They played about one-third less matches than England and in some years, rather cautiously, against carefully selected opponents.

In three years—1964, 1967 and 1969—they went through undefeated, in a total of 16 matches. The same year England played 28 games.

The chart doesn't tell the whole story. Among other things, it doesn't split up home and away matches and doesn't differentiate between fairly insignificant friendly encounters and World Cup finals. I know it should, but I just hope that these things, over a ten-year period, even out to a satisfactory degree.

England, once the model of splendid isolation, played the largest number of full internationals in the 1960's—just one short of a century. Actually, some records do speak of 100 games — but these include England's friendly against a FIFA team or, as it was billed in some quarters, "Rest of the World". This I naturally disregarded.

Needless to say, England chalked up the most wins and scored the most goals in this period. Italy suffered the smallest number of defeats and conceded the fewest goals. Actually, only Italy, West Germany and the USSR conceded less than one goal per match with defence-minded Italy well in the lead: only 0.79 goals conceded per game.

TEN YEARS OF EUROPEAN RESULTS — 1960 - 1969

	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Goals for	Goals against	%	WC Finals
BRAZIL	113	75	17	21	257	129	73.89	3
Italy	62	38	14	10	135	49	72.58	3
England	99	60	23	16	233	108	72.22	3
W. Germany	78	48	15	15	172	71	70	3
USSR	96	54	24	18	177	93	68	3
Hungary	80	45	16	19	160	99	66	2
Sweden	91	49	19	23	187	106	64	1
Czechoslovakia	65	33	12	127	20	79	60	2
Bulgaria	67	34	12	21	99	88	59.70	3
Yugoslavia	83	41	16	26	166	114	59.03	1
Spain	59	27	13	19	87	65	56.77	2
E. Germany	61	26	17	18	138	85	56.55	–
Belgium	65	32	8	25	111	90	55	1
Scotland	64	28	13	23	138	115	53.82	–
Rumania	61	26	13	22	98	89	53.27	1
Portugal	56	24	10	22	85	75	51	1
Poland	78	30	19	29	163	117	50.64	–
Denmark	89	39	12	38	195	161	50.56	–
Greece	38	13	8	17	60	73	44	–
Austria	70	26	11	33	94	99	45	–
Holland	66	20	16	30	100	94	42	–
Turkey	56	18	11	27	60	96	41	–
Norway	77	24	12	41	108	183	39.61	–
N. Ireland	51	16	8	27	75	108	39.21	–
France	66	18	14	34	97	116	37	1
Switzerland	64	18	10	36	89	128	35	2
Eire	45	12	7	26	53	94	34	–
Wales	54	12	10	32	79	114	31	–
Finland	59	10	7	42	61	177	22	–

Legend: % refers to the percentage of points won in the ten years. The last figures indicate how many times a country has reached the final stages of the World Cup in the 1960's — and here we include 1970, Mexico, too.

Further down the table all sorts of surprising facts emerge. Take for example Denmark, ranking only a modest 17th, which scored an amazing 195 goals in the 10 years — more than any other country in Europe except England. Admittedly they also conceded quite a few, 161 — indicating that in today's goal-starved world of soccer Denmark may offer more than average spectator entertainment.

Sweden's high sixth ranking may surprise some. However, without detracting anything from their achievement it must be pointed out that a large percentage of their games were against fellow Scandinavians who rank only 17th, 22nd and 28th (last) on the list.

Considering the recent glamour generated by Real Madrid, Spain's tenth place isn't really flattering. But Spain's national side rarely if ever excelled, as their results show. Portugal's 15th place will surprise only those who judge them purely on their great 1966 World Cup showing. Before 1965 they couldn't register a better than 50 per cent effort in any one year —and in 1968 and 1969 their total is even more depressing: nine matches for one win and three draws.

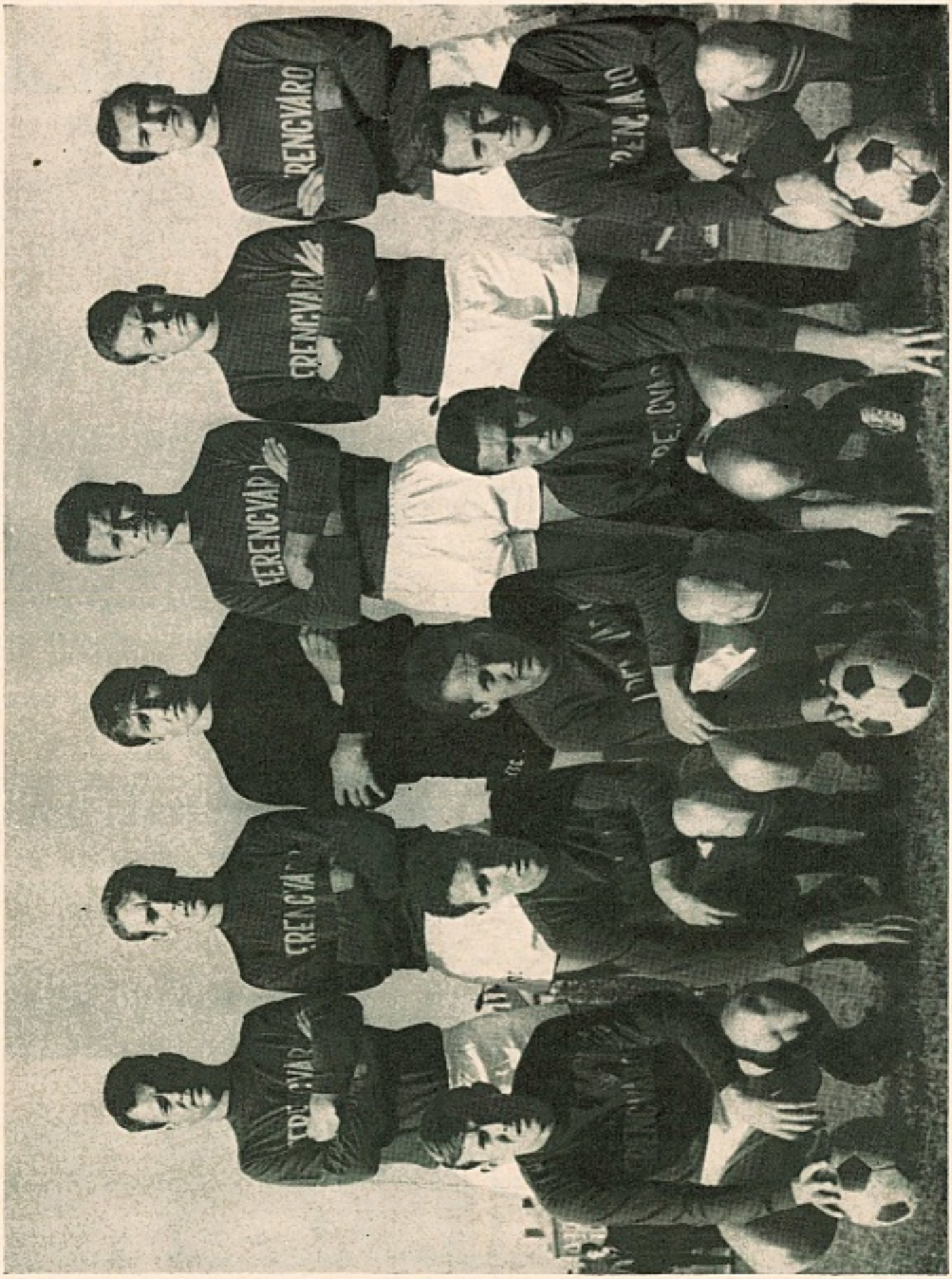
Another country whose sad fate deserves mention is Austria, now occupying only a lowly 19th place, behind many that once they would have whipped with their hands tied behind their backs.

England excepted, the other British teams are hardly likely to look back at the 1960's with too much nostalgia. The once mighty Scotland is squeezed in between Belgium and Rumania, while Northern Ireland and Wales are among the tailenders. Both had their brief moment of glory and glamour in the 1958 World Cup; since then, almost in direct ratio with England's rise, both have declined sharply.

Little Finland—what can you say about her? In three years out of the ten they lost all their matches (1960, 1962 and 1968) and only once, in 1963, did they end up with a healthy balance, winning one and drawing two of their three matches, against Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

All the above, as I pointed out, refers to Europe. However, if you decide to go global—Brazil will emerge as the best team of the 1960's. They also played and won more games than any other country in this ten-year period and, almost needless to say, scored the most goals.

In some years Brazil played a fantastic number of internationals: 17 in 1960, 18 in 1963, 17 in 1966 and 20 in 1968. Last year they were content with only nine matches—of which they won eight and drew one for a splendid 95 per cent average.



FERENCVAROS: Back row left to right: Novak, Juhasz, Ceczi, Pancsics, Szucs, Balint, Front row: Szoke, Branikovits, Albert, Rakosi, Katona. (UPI)

SOCCERTISTICS

Edited by MICHAEL CHANDLER

EUROPEAN LEAGUE RESULTS

W/E December 28

Eire: Einn Harps 1, Limerick 0; Drumcondra 3, Shelbourne 2; Bohemians 0, Cork Celtic 1; Cork Hibernians 0, Waterford 0; Drogheda 2, Shamrock Rovers 2; Athlone Town 1, Sligo Rovers 0; St. Patrick's 1, Dundalk 5.

W/E January 4

Spain: Pontevedra 0, Zaragossa 1; Real Madrid 3, Elche 1; Las Palmas 1, Atletico Madrid 1; Coruna 0, Barcelona 0; Atletico Bilbao 1, Granada 0; Sevilla 4, Valencia 2; Real Sociedad 2, Mallorca 0; Sabadell 3, Celta Vigo 1.

Portugal: Varzim 4, Guimaraes 1; Uniao de Tomar 0, CUF Barreiro 0; Benfica 3, Leixoes 0; Barreirense 4, Acedemica 1; Braga 1, Sporting 3; Porto 0, Beleneses 0; Setubal 2, Boavista 1

Italy: Bologna 1, Roma 1; Cagliari 2, Torino 0; Fiorentina 3, Palermo 1; Inter-Milan 3, Sampdoria 2; Juventus 1, Bari 0; Vicenza 1, AC Milan 0; Lazio 1, Brescia 0; Napoli 2, Verona 1.

Northern Ireland: Ballymena 0, Distillery 0; Bangor 3, Cliftonville 1; Crusaders 1, Ards 1; Derry 0, Glentoran 0; Glenavon 4, Coleraine 2; Linfield 0, Portadown 3.

Belgium: Anderlecht 5, Beveren-Waas 0; AS Ostende 4, Racing White 2; Crossing 0, FC Bruges 2; Waregem 3, St. Trond 1; Beerschot 1, Union St. Gilloise 0.

Greece: AEK 1, Kavala 0; Aris 2, Iraklis 0; Olympiakos Wolos 1, OF Iraklion 0; Olympiakos Piraus 1, Pierikos 0; Panathinaikos 3, Panachaiki 0; Panionios 0, Proodeftiki 0; Panseraikos 3, Vyzas 1; PAOK 1, Ethnikos 1; Olympiakos Nikosia 0, Aigaleo 3, (Midweek)—Proodeftiki 1, Panseraikos 1; Aigaleo 0, Olympiakos Wolos 0; Ethnikos 1, Aris 1; Iraklis 2, Vyzas 0; Kavala 1, PAOK 1; OF Iraklion 0, AEK 0; Panathinaikos 0, Olympiakos Piraus 0; Pierikos 2, Panionios 0; Panachaiki 4, Olympiakos Nikosia 1.

Eire: Drogheda 0, Shelbourne 0; St. Patrick's 1, Waterford 4; Cork Hibernians 1, Finn Harps 1; Athlone Town 2, Cork Celtic 2; Bohemians 1, Shamrock Rovers 2; Sligo Rovers 2, Limerick 1; Drumcondra 1, Dundalk 3.

Turkey: Altay Izmir 1, Galatasaray 0; Ankaragucu 2, Vefa 1; Istanbulspor 4, Demirspor 1; Besiktas 0, Mersin I.Y. 0; PTT 0, Fenerbache 0; Eskisehirspor 5 Goztepe 2; Samsunspor 0, Genclerbirligi 0; Altinordu 1, Buraspor 0.

W/E January 11

Northern Ireland: Ards 4, Ballymena 1; Cliftonville 3, Glenavon 3; Coleraine 2, Bangor 2; Distillery 2, Derry 4; Glentoran 2, Linfield 2; Portadown 4, Crusaders 1.

Italy: Bologna 2, Inter-Milan 1; Cagliari 4, Samporia 0; AC Milan 1, Brescia 1; Napoli 1, Vicenza 0; Palermo 1, Juventus 3; Roma 1, Bari 0; Verona 0, Fiorentina 1; Torino 3, Lazio 0.

Belgium: St. Trond 2, Anderlecht 1; Union St. Gilloise 0, Crossing 0; FC Bruges 5, FC Liege 2; Racing White 3, Lierse SK 1; Standard Liege 5, AS Ostende 0; La Gantoise 4, Beringen 1; SC Charleroi 1, Beveren-Waas 0; Beerschot 1 Waregem 1.

Spain: Real Zaragossa 1, Atletico Bilbao 1; Granada 0, Real Sociedad 3; Mallorca 1, Sabadell 0; Valencia 2, Atletico Madrid 3; Real Madrid 5, Las Palmas 0; Celta Vigo 1, Sevilla 1; Barcelona 2, Pontevedra 0; Elche 1, Coruna 0.

Eire: Limerick 1, Cork Hibernians 0; Dundalk 0, Drogheda 3; Waterford 6, Drumcondra 1; Shamrock Rovers 2, Athlone Town 0; Finn Harps 2, St. Patrick's 2; Shelbourne 3, Bohemians 2; Cork Celtic 3, Sligo Rovers 0.

Turkey: Galatasaray 1, PTT 1; Altay 1, Eskisehirspor 1; Demispor 1, Gostepe 1; Fenerbahce 2, Samsunspor 0; Besiktas 2, Altinordu 1; Genclerbirligi 1, Vefa 0; Buraspor 3, Ankaragucu 0; Mersin I.Y. 1, Istanbulspor 0.

Greece: Panathinaikos 3, Pierikos 2; Ethnikos 1, AEK 1; Iraklis 1, PAOK 1; Aris 2, Panseraikos 1; Vyzas 1, Panionios 0; Kavala 1, Olympiakos Wolos 0; Aigaleo 2, Panachaiki 0; OF Iraklion 4, Olympiakos Nikosia 0; Olympiakos Piraus 2, Proodeftiki 0.

W/E January 18

West Germany: Alemannia Aachen 0, Rotweiss Essen 0; Schalke 04 0, Eintracht Frankfurt 0, Rotweiss Oberhausen 0, Kaiserslautern 0.

Northern Ireland: Ards 2, Glentoran 3; Ballymena 1, Coleraine 5; Crusaders 8, Cliftonville 3; Derry 0, Portadown 4; Glenavon 0, Distillery 0; Linfield 4, Bangor 1.

Portugal: Sporting 3, Setubal 1; Guimaraes 2, Benfica 1; Belenenses 1, Varzim 0; Boavista 2, Uniao de Tomar 0; Leixoes 2, Braga 1; CUF 0, Barreirense 1; Academica 1, Porto 2.

Italy: Bari 0, AC Milan 5; Brescia 0, Roma 1; Fiorentina 1, Napoli 2; Inter-Milan 2, Palermo 0; Juventus 3, Verona 0, Vicenza 1, Cagliari 2; Lazio 1, Bologna 0; Sampdoria 1, Torino 1.

Spain: Real Sociedad 5, Zaragossa 0; Sevilla 3, Mallorca 1; Pontevedra 1, Elche 1; Atletico Madrid 4, Celta Vigo 0; Coruna 1 Real Madrid 1; Atletico Bilbao 1, Barcelona 1; Sabadell 2, Granada 1.

Holland: DWS 0, Feijenoord 3; NEC 0, Ajex 0; Telstar 1, DOS 2; SVV 1, Twente 0; ADO 2, PSV 1; MVV 2, Holland Sport 0; Go Ahead 2, Haarlem 1; Sparta 0, AZ'67 0.

Belgium: FC Liege 1, Standard 1; Waregem 3, Union St. Gilloise 0, Crossing 0, Racing White 1; Ostende 0, La Gantoise 0; Beveren-Waas 2, FC Bruges 3; Lierse SK 1, St. Trond 1; Anderlecht 2, CS Charleroi 0; Beringen 1, Beerschot 1.

Luxembourg: Jeunesse Esch 3, Aris Bonneweg 0.

France: Rouen 0, Angouleme 2.

Eire: St. Patrick's Athletic 2, Cork Hibernians 1; Sligo Rovers 3, Shamrock Rovers 1; Cork Celtic 1, Limerick 1; Bohemians 3, Dundalk 0; Drumcondra 4, Finn Harps 4; Drogheda 1, Waterford 1; Athlone Town 1, Shelbourne 2.

Greece: Olympiakos Nikosia 1, Kavala 0; Panathinaikos 3, Proodeftiki 1; Olympiakos Piraus 1, Vyzas 0; Olympiakos Wolos 1, Ethnikos 3; Pierikos 2, Panachaiki 2; AEK 2, Iraklis 0; Panionios 0, Aris 1; PAOK 3, Panseraikos 0; Aigaleo 0, OF Iraklion 0.

W/E January 25

Italy: Bologna 0, Juventus 0; Cagliari 4, Brescia 0; Vicenza 1, Palermo 1; AC Milan 3, Lazio 0; Napoli 1, Bari 0, Roma 1, Verona 1; Sampdoria 1, Fiorentina 3; Torino 0, Inter-Milan 0.

West Germany: TSV 1860 Munchen 4, VfB Stuttgart 1; Alemannia Aachen 2, Hertha BSC 4; Borussia Dortmund 3, Rotweiss Oberhausen 2.

Portugal: Uniao de Tomar 0, Sporting 3; Setubal 7, Braga 1; Barreirense 2, Boavista 0; Varzim 2, Academica 2; Guimaraes 2,

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.....

Leixoes 0; Porto 2, CUF 0; Benfica v. Belenenses (match abandoned after 43 minutes).

Northern Ireland: Bangor 1, Glenavon 0; Cliftonville 2, Derry 3; Coleraine 2, Ards 1; Distillery 0, Linfield 1; Glentoran 7, Crusaders 2; Portadown 1, Ballymena 1.

Belgium: Waregem 1, Anderlecht 1; Union St. Gilloise 2, FC Liege 1; FC Bruges 4, Lierse SK 1; St. Trond 1, Ostende 0; Standard Liege 5, Beringen 3; La Gantoise 4, SC Charleroi 1; Racing White 0, Beveren-Waas 0; Beerschot 3, Crossing 1.

Spain: Elche 0, Atletico Bilbao 1, Granada 0, Sevilla 0; Zaragossa 1, Sabadell 0; Barcelona 2 Real Sociedad 1; Mallorca 1, Atletico Madrid 0; Celta Vigo 1, Valencia 0; Real Madrid 2, Pontevedra 1; Las Palmas 0, Coruna 1.

Holland: NAC 2, DWS 0; Feijenoord 2, Telstar 0; DOS 1, SVV 0; PSV 2, MVV 4; Holland Sport 2, Go Ahead 2; Haarlem 0, Sparta 2.

France: Bastia 3, Angers 1; Metz 1, St. Etienne 2; Rennes 1, Rouen 1; Red Star Paris 1, Sochaux 0; Nantes 6, Ajaccio 0; Angouleme 6, Valenciennes 1; Sedan 1, Lyon 0; Marseille 4, Nimes 0.

Eire: Waterford 3, Bohemians 2; Hibernians 0, Drumcondra 0; Dundalk 1, Athlone Town 2; Shamrock Rovers 1, Cork Celtic 3; Finn Harps 1, Drogheda 1; Limerick 1, St. Patrick's 0; Shelbourne Rovers 0, Sligo Rovers 0.

Greece: Iraklis 1, Olympiakos Wolos 0; Ethnikos 4, Olympiakos Nikosia 0; Aris 1, Olympiakos Nikosia 0; Aris 1, Olympiakos Piraus 0; Vyzas 0, Panathinaikos 1; Kavala 1, Aigaleo 0; Panachaiki 2, OF Iraklion 1; Panseraikos 1, AEK 1; PAOK 0, Panionios 0; Proodeftiki 1, Pierikos 1.

LEAGUE TABLES

NORTHERN IRELAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Glentoran	15	10	4	1	33	12	24
Ards	15	8	5	2	28	15	21
Portadown	15	9	2	4	33	22	20
Derry	14	8	2	4	27	22	18
Coleraine	15	8	2	5	33	23	18
Linfield	15	7	3	5	29	24	17
Crusaders	15	6	2	7	37	34	14
Bangor	14	5	3	6	23	25	13
Glenavon	15	3	5	7	17	29	11
Ballymena	15	3	3	9	17	32	9
Distillery	15	3	3	9	18	35	9
Cliftonville	15	1	2	13	15	37	4

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cagliari	18	11	6	1	26	7	28
Juventus	18	10	4	4	26	11	24
Fiorentina	18	10	3	5	27	22	23
AC Milan	18	8	6	4	26	13	22
Inter-Milan	18	8	6	4	22	14	22
Napoli	18	6	6	4	15	10	22
Torino	18	7	6	5	15	14	20
Roma	18	6	7	5	18	22	19
Vicenza	18	7	4	7	21	16	18
Bologna	18	3	10	5	14	15	16
Verona	18	5	6	7	15	18	16
Lazio	18	6	3	9	14	21	15
Bari	18	3	7	8	5	18	13
Sampdoria	18	1	9	8	12	24	11
Palermo	18	2	6	10	15	30	10
Brescia	18	2	5	11	9	25	9

WEST GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
B. Monchen.	17	12	3	2	40	13	27
Hertha BSC	18	10	3	5	29	20	23
Bayern Munchen	16	10	2	4	36	19	22
Koln	17	10	2	5	41	16	22
Schalke 04	17	8	5	4	27	23	21
Bor. Dortmund	18	9	3	6	30	26	21
Hamburger SV	17	6	5	6	30	27	17
RW Essen	18	5	7	6	24	26	17
VfB Stuttgart	18	7	3	8	34	37	17
Kaiserslautern	18	6	5	7	24	31	17
MSV Duisberg	17	5	6	6	21	27	16
Eint. Frankfurt	18	5	6	7	22	29	16
E. Brunswick	17	5	5	7	18	25	15
RW Oberhausen	19	6	3	10	29	35	15
Werder Bremen	17	4	6	7	18	24	14
Hannover 96	17	5	3	9	23	33	13
Aleman. Aachen	19	4	4	11	20	39	12
TSV 1860 Munch.	18	4	3	11	17	33	11

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sporting	16	13	2	1	37	9	28
Benfica	15	10	1	4	39	8	21
Setubal	16	8	4	4	34	18	20
Varzim	16	7	5	4	19	14	19
Barreirense	16	7	4	5	28	22	18
Porto	16	7	4	5	23	20	18
Guimaraes	16	7	3	6	24	23	17
Belenenses	15	6	4	5	16	18	16
Leixoes	16	7	0	9	22	29	14
Academica	16	4	5	7	23	29	13
Braga	16	4	3	9	17	34	11
CUF	16	4	2	10	14	28	10
Uniao de Tomar	16	3	3	10	12	33	9
Boavista	16	2	4	10	18	41	8

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atletico Madrid	20	12	4	4	34	15	28
Atletico Bilbao	20	11	6	3	28	13	28
Real Madrid	20	11	5	4	38	22	27
Real Zaragossa	20	10	4	6	24	23	24
Real Sociedad	20	11	1	8	33	25	23
Sevilla	20	9	5	6	25	21	23
Barcelona	20	8	6	6	24	22	22
Granada	20	8	5	7	18	18	21
Valencia	19	7	5	7	19	17	19
Celta Vigo	20	7	5	8	23	26	19
Sabadell	20	8	2	10	21	22	[illegible]
Las Palmas	19	6	4	9	21	28	16
Elche	20	5	6	9	21	31	16
Coruna	20	5	6	9	15	24	16
Mallorca	20	5	3	12	26	40	13
Pontevedra	20	1	3	16	11	34	5

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Feijenoord	18	14	4	0	43	7	32
Alax	17	15	1	1	46	9	31
PSV	19	11	3	5	40	24	25
MVV	19	7	8	4	29	23	22
ADO	18	7	7	4	25	18	21
Sparta	19	8	5	6	31	25	21
NAC	17	8	4	5	20	18	20
Twente	18	7	6	5	20	19	20
Holland Sport	18	8	4	6	25	25	20
NEC	18	6	6	6	19	18	18
Haarlem	19	5	8	6	15	21	18
Go Ahead	18	5	7	6	19	26	17
AZ'67	18	5	6	7	17	21	16
DOS	19	4	4	11	13	26	12
Telstar	19	3	4	12	16	30	10
SVV	19	3	3	13	18	48	9
GVAV	16	2	4	10	10	26	8
DWS	19	3	2	14	12	34	8

BELGIUM

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Standard Liege	19	12	5	2	42	17	29
La Gantoise	19	12	3	4	38	19	27
FC Bruges	18	12	2	4	41	25	26
Beerschot	20	9	6	5	26	15	24
Anderlecht	18	8	6	4	39	17	22
Beveren-Waas	20	8	6	6	25	22	22
Racing White	20	7	6	7	25	30	20
Lierse SK	18	6	7	5	25	21	19
St. Trond	20	7	5	8	29	32	19
Waregem	20	6	7	7	23	35	19
SC Charleroi	19	8	2	9	26	26	18
Union St. Gilloise	19	5	7	7	17	25	17
Ostende	20	4	6	10	18	37	14
Crossing	20	3	5	12	17	42	11
Beringen	18	2	6	10	18	33	10
FC Liege	18	3	3	12	20	33	9

FRANCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
St. Etienne	19	14	4	1	54	19	32
Marseille	20	9	7	4	37	22	25
Bordeaux	19	9	6	4	36	24	24
Angouleme	20	8	7	5	36	26	23
Sedan/RCP	19	8	6	5	27	24	22
Nantes	18	8	3	7	34	26	19
Strasbourg	18	9	1	8	38	34	19
Sochaux	18	6	6	6	26	28	18
Red Star Paris	19	6	6	7	27	33	18
Nimes	20	7	3	10	36	36	17
Bastia	20	7	3	10	34	42	17
Angers	20	6	5	9	31	39	17
Ajaccio	20	7	3	10	20	29	17
Lyon	20	7	3	10	34	47	17
Valenciennes	20	6	4	10	21	36	16
Metz	18	5	6	7	24	24	16
Rouen	20	5	6	9	27	31	16
Rennes	20	4	7	9	29	51	15

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Panathinaikos	17	15	2	0	38	10	49
Olym. Piraus	17	12	3	2	30	11	43
Aris	17	12	2	3	25	7	43
AEK	17	10	5	2	24	10	42
Iraklis	17	9	4	4	22	17	39
Aigaleo	17	6	6	5	21	15	35
RAOK	17	3	11	3	24	16	34
Panseraikos	17	6	5	6	18	17	34
Pierikos	17	4	7	6	19	21	32
Ethnikos	17	3	9	5	17	20	32
Proodeftiki	17	5	5	7	15	20	32
OF Irakis	17	5	4	8	16	20	31
Panionios	17	5	3	9	24	20	30
Olym. Wolos	17	5	3	9	11	21	30
Panachaiki	17	4	4	9	21	36	29
Vyzas	17	4	4	9	16	29	29
Kavala	17	4	3	10	10	23	28
Olym. Nikosia	17	1	1	15	5	47	20

EIRE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Waterford	17	12	2	3	39	21	26
Cork Hibernians	17	9	5	3	25	13	23
Dundalk	17	10	2	5	33	27	22
Limerick	17	9	3	5	25	15	21
Shamrock Rovers	17	7	7	3	31	23	21
Finn Harps	17	7	6	4	37	29	20
Sligo Rovers	17	7	4	6	22	25	18
Shelbourne	17	6	5	6	25	21	17
Cork Celtic	17	5	5	7	23	25	15
Drogheda	17	3	7	7	17	26	13
St. Patrick's	17	6	1	10	22	31	13
Drumcondra	17	3	6	8	25	38	12
Athlone Town	17	4	3	10	20	36	11
Bohemians	17	2	2	13	21	35	6

Roma's Joaquin Peiro is foiled by Verona goalkeeper Pier Luigi Pizzaballa in an Italian league match. Renato Cappellini looks on. (UPI)

SOUTH AMERICAN LEAGUE RESULTS

December 21 (and week)

Uruguay: Nacional 1, Sudamerica 0; Penarol 2, Cerro 0; River Plate 1, Bella Vista 0.

Chile (National Championship)—Colo Colo 2, Wanderers 1; Rangers 3, Green Cross 1; Universidad de Chile 2, Union Espanola 0. Relegation play-off's: Magallanes beat Santiago Morning 4-1 and 2-1; loser relegated. (December 23)—Green Cross 3, Wanderers 0; Rangers 2, Colo Colo 1.

Peru: Universitario de Deportes 1, Juan Aurich 1; Octavio Espinoza 4, Sport Boys 2.

Paraguay: Guarani 3, Libertad 3; Olimpia 2, Nacional 1; Cerro Porteno 3, Sportivo Luqueno 1.

Colombia: Championship play-off (December 19)—Millionarios de Bogota 1, Deportivo Cali 1; (December 21)—Millionarios 0, Cali 0; (December 25)—Millionarios 0, Cali 0 after extra time. Millionarios won second part of championship on penalties and play-off with Cali (again) for title, Cali were first part winners.

Mexico: America 1, Atlas 0; Cruz Ozul 2, Veracruz 0.

● *Continued overleaf*

SOCCERTISTICS

● Continued from previous page

December 28 (and week)

Uruguay (last games)—Penarol 3, Bella Vista 2; Sudamerica 2, Cerro 2; River Plate 3, Nacional 2.

Chile: Union Espanola 3, Wanderers 2; Colo Colo 2, Universidad de Chile 2. (January 1)—Universidad de Chile 3, Rangers de Talca 1.

Peru: Universitario de Deportes 2, Deportivo Municipal 1; Carlos Manucci 1, Sporting Cristal 0; Octavio Espinoza 0, KDT 0; Juan Aurich 1, Alianza Lima 0; Centro Iqueno 2, Porvenir Miraflores 0; Defensor Arica 3, Atletico Grau de Piura 1; Defensor Lima 1, Sport Boys 0

Mexico: Guadalajara 2, Laguna 1.

January 4 (and week)

Chile: Rangers 2, Wanderers 1; Colo Colo 2, Green Cross 2; (January 8)—Universidad de Chile 2, Wanderers 1; Union Espanola 5, Colo Colo 3.

Peru: Alianza Lima 4, Deportivo Municipal 3; Universitario de Deportes 1, Atletico Grau 1; Defensor Arica 1, Juan Aurich 1; Sporting Cristal 3, KDT 0; Porvenir Miraflores 5, Octavio Espinoza 1; Sports Boys 3, Carlos Manucci 1; Defensor Lima 5, Centro Iqueno 3.

January 11

Chile: Universidad de Chile 1, Green Cross 0; Rangers 2, Union Espanola 2.

Colombia (National title play-offs): Millionarios de Bogota 2, America de Cali 1.

Bolivia Bolivar 3, Oriente Petrolio 2; Mariscal Santa Cruz 2, San Jose 2; Santa Cruz 1, Universitario 2.

LEAGUE TABLE

PERU
(Final standings)

1.	Uni. de Deportes	25 pts.
2.	Defensor Arica	22 ,,
	Dep. Municipal	22 ,,
4.	Alianza Lima	21 ,,
	Juan Aurich	21 ,,
6.	Atletico Grau	16 ,,

PARAGUAY
(Final standings)

1.	Guarani	37 pts.
2.	Olimpia	33 ,,
3.	Cerro Porteno	30 ,,
4	Sp. Luqueno	27 ,,
5.	Libertad	23 ,,
6.	Sol de America	21 ,,
7.	Nacional	20 ,,

BOLIVIA
as on January 11)

1.	Bolivar	8 pts.
2.	Santa Cruz	5 ,,
3.	Universitario	4 ,,
	Oriente Petrolio	4 ,,
	San Jose	4 ,,

MEXICO
(final league table)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guadalajara	30	18	9	3	54	24	45
Cruz Azul	30	14	11	5	40	19	39
Veracruz	30	16	7	7	47	36	39
Toluca	30	13	7	10	46	35	33
Necaxa	30	11	11	8	32	26	33
America	30	12	7	11	50	48	31
Leon	30	11	9	10	43	43	31
Pachuca	30	11	7	12	41	50	29
Monterrey	30	9	10	11	39	41	28
Atlante	30	10	8	12	51	55	28
Oro	30	10	7	13	41	58	27
Atlas	30	8	10	12	25	37	26
Universidad	30	8	9	13	42	43	25
Irapuato	30	8	8	14	26	36	24
Torreon	30	5	13	12	24	37	23
Laguna	30	6	7	17	31	44	19

URUGUAY
(Final placings)

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Nacional	25	19	5	1	43
Peñarol	25	16	7	2	39
River Plate	25	10	8	7	28
Bella Vista	25	10	6	9	26
Sudamerica	25	7	8	10	22
Cerro	25	5	7	13	17

CHILE
National Championship
(final standings as on December 14)

Section A:	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Colo Colo	17	10	4	3	32	19	26
Rangers	17	7	5	55	25	24	24
U. Espanola	17	8	4	5	28	23	24
Audax-Italiano	17	5	7	5	24	22	18
Dep. La Serena	17	6	5	6	23	22	17
O'Higgins	17	7	3	7	20	24	17
Everton	17	4	6	7	25	28	17
Magallanes	17	5	5	7	27	32	15
Antofagasta	17	4	6	7	16	26	14

Section B:	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wanderers	17	11	6	0	37	17	28
Uni. de Chile	18	9	2	7	29	23	25
Green Cross	17	4	7	6	24	21	19
Huachipato	17	3	11	3	18	19	19
Uni. Catolica	18	7	5	6	32	30	19
Palestino	17	4	7	6	23	24	18
Union Calera	17	4	5	8	21	32	14
Dep. Concepcion	17	4	5	8	18	22	13
Santiago Morning	17	5	1	11	20	36	11

(Numbers in brackets are points carried forward from regional championships. Tables to not balance because intersection games were played. Top three of each section qualified for final round.)

Final Round:	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Uni. de Chile	5	4	1	0	10	4	9
Rangers	5	3	1	1	10	8	7
Green Cross	5	2	1	2	7	6	5
Uni. Espanola	5	2	1	2	10	10	5
Colo Colo	5	1	2	2	10	12	4
Wanderers	5	0	0	5	5	12	0

SUPER CUP
(South American Section)

DECEMBER 20

Racing Club (0) 0
Estudiantes (0) 0

Racing: Cejas; Paolino, Chabay; Aguirre, Perfumo, Basile; Lamelza, Rulli, Machado da Silva, Cardenas, Cominelli (Adorno).

Estudiantes: Flores (G.); Pagnanini, Malbernat; Bilardo, Zuccarelli, Madero; Romeo, Pachame (Echeverrar), Conigliaro, Verde, Veron (Rudzki).

(Ref.: L. Pestarino/Argentina).

DECEMBER 23

Penarol (2) 4 (Spencer 2, Rocha 2) 22,000
Racing Club (0) 1

Penarol: Mazurkiewicz; Forlan, Caetano; Goncalves (Viera), Figueroa, Matosas; Acuna, Rocha, Spencer (Joya), Onega (E.), Losada.

Racing: Cejas; Paolino, Chabay; Rulli, Perfumo, Basile; Lamelza, Aguirre (Souto), Machado da Silva, Cominelli (Adorno) Cardenas.

(Ref.: J. Amor/Chile).

DECEMBER 30

Estudiantes (1) 1 (Verde)
Penarol (0) 2 (Rocha 2)

Estudiantes: Flores (G.); Pagnanini, Malbernat; Bilardo, Spadaro, Madero; Romeo, Pachame, Conigliaro, Verde (Aguilar), Veron.

Penarol: Mazurkiewicz; Forlan, Caetano; Goncalves, Figueroa, Matosas; Acuna, Rocha, Spencer, E. Onega (Cortes), Losada.

CONCACAF TOURNAMENT

(Central American and Caribbean Football Association Championship), at San Jose, Costa Rica.

NOVEMBER 23

Costa Rica (1) 3 (Cascante, Saenz, Darkins own goal) 7,389
Jamaica (0) 0

Costa Rica: Perez; Solano, McDonald; Vera (Chacon), Elizondo, Rojas; Grant, Saenz, Wanchope (Hernandez), Cascante, Daniels.

Jamaica: Constantine; Darkins, Brown; Cameron, Scott, Stewart; Winston (Welsh), Hill, Mason (Kerr), Brown, Lattimore.

NOVEMBER 27

Guatemala (1) 2 (Gamboa, Fion)
Trinidad (0) 0

Guatemala: Gonzalez; Leon, Melgar; Salamanca, Ovalle, Montoya; Melgar, Gamboa, Fion, Torres, Morales (Penaut).

Trinidad: Figeroux; Rondon, Romano; Mascall, Labastide, Murren; Grell, Haynes, Cummings, Springer, Cave (Joseph).

Mexico (1) 2 (Mancilla, Sabater)
Jamaica (0) 0

Mexico: Palacios; Santana, Muniz; Urbina, Rodriguez, Uribe; Barba (Diaz), Sales, Mancilla (Crespo), Langarica, Sabater.

Jamaica: Constantine; Dawkins, Brown (Simmons); Cameron, Scott, Stewart; Kerr (Hill), Largie, Welch, Hamilton, Mason.

Costa Rica (1) 2 (Grant, Cascante)
Dutch Antilles (1) 1 (Croens)

Costa Rica: Perez; Solano, Rolas; Chacon, Elizondo, McDonald; Daniels, Saenz, Grant, Cascante, Hernandez.

Dutch Antilles: Richardson; Eric Martina, Bodak; Martis, Ebio Martina, Pablo; Seferina, Martijn, Croens, Victoria, Toppenberg.

NOVEMBER 29

Guatemala (4) 6 (Melgar 3, Salamanca, Valdes, Meulens own goal)
Dutch Antilles (1) 1 (Regales)

NOVEMBER 30

Trinidad (2) 3 (Cummings, Douglas, Haynes)
Jamaica (2) 2 (Scott, Hamilton)

Trinidad: Figeroux; Rondon, David; Grell, Labastide, Murren; Mervin, Haynes, Cummings, Leon, Cave (Douglas).

Jamaica: Constantine; Dawkins, Simmons; Cameron, Scott, Stewart; Kerr (Largie), Welch, Marshall (Lattimore), Hamilton, Mason.

Costa Rica (2) 2 (Santana, Saenz)
Mexico (0) 0 20,460

Costa Rica: Umana; Solano, McDonald; Chacon, Elizondo, Rojas; Hernandez, Grant, Saenz, Cascante, Daniels (Wanchope).

Mexico: Palacios; Santana, Muniz; Urbina, Rodriguez, Uribe; Barba (Crespo), Sales, Mancilla, Langarica (Zamora), Sabater.

● Continued on page 42

Celtic's John Hughes and Dunfermline's John Arrol, Willie Callaghan and Billy McLaren play the waiting game in their league match at Parkhead. (A)

WORLD CUP STAR
GERD MUELLER (West Germany)

SOCCERTISTICS

● *Continued from page 40*

DECEMBER 2

Dutch Antilles (1) 3 (Loefstok 2, Martijn)
Trinidad (1) 1 (Haynes)

Dutch Antilles: Richardson; Melfor, Boekhor; Brafmart, Pablo, Martina; Regales (Seferina), Martijn (Victorina), Loefstok, Martis, Toppenberg.

Trinidad: Figeroux; Rondon, David; Springer, Labastide, Murren; Grell, Haynes (Cust), Douglas, Leon, Cave.

Guatemala (0) 1 (Fion)
Mexico (0) 0

Guatemala: Gonzalez; Leon (R.), Melgar (A.); Torres, Ovalle, Leon (L.); Melgar (N.), Fion, Gamboa (Penant), Valdes, Salamanca.

Mexico: Palacios; Santana, Muniz; Langarica, Negrete, Sales; Mancilla, Crespo, Damaso (Diaz), Urbina, Sabater.

DECEMBER 4

Dutch Antilles (1) 2 (Toppenberg 2)
Mexico (0) 2 (Crespo, Barba)

Dutch Antilles: Richardson; Melfor, Bodak; Brafhaard, Pablo, Martina; Martijn (Seferina), Regales, Loefstok (Victorina), Martis, Toppenberg.

Mexico: Diaz; Santana, Sandoval; Zamora (Langarica), Rodriguez, Uribe; Barba, Crespo, Sales, Urbina, Perez (Fernandez).

Guatemala (0) 0
Jamaica (0) 0

Guatemala: Gonzalez; Oliva, Melgar (A.); De Leon, Torres, Leon; Melgar (N.), Fion, Roldan, Valdez, Salamanca.

Jamaica: Constantine; Dawkins, Bernard; Cameron, Scott, Stewart; Hamilton, Welch, Largie, Mason (Maxwell), Kerr (Marshall).

Costa Rica (1) 5 (Ruiz 3, Grant, Elizondo)
Trinidad (0) 0

Costa Rica: Umana; Solano, McDonald; Cascante, Elizondo, Rojas; Grant, Hernandez, Ruiz (Vega), Chacon, Daniels (Wanchope).

Trinidad: Crawford; Rondon (Romano), David; Grell, Murren, Labastide; Cust (Douglas), Haynes, Cummings, De Leon, Brewster.

DECEMBER 6

Dutch Antilles (1) 2 (Regales, Martijn)
Jamaica (0) 1 (Largie)

Dutch Antilles: Richardson; Melfor, Bodak; Martis, Martina, Pablo; Regales, Brafhaard, Loefstok, Martijn, Toppenberg.

Jamaica: Constantine; Dawkins, Bernard; Brown, Scott, Maxwell; Kerr, Largie, Kerr (A.), Welch, Mason.

DECEMBER 7

Trinidad (0) 0
Mexico (0) 0

Trinidad: Figeroux; Rondon, Grell; De Leon, Murren, Labastide; Cust, Cummings, Douglas, Joseph (Springer), Haynes.

Mexico: Diaz (R.); Santana, Sandoval; Urbina, Rodriguez, Uribe; Barba, Sales (Langarica), Mancilla (Crespo), Fernandez, Perez.

Costa Rica (0) 1 (Wanchope)
Guatemala (1) 1 (Fion)

Costa Rica: Umana; Solano, McDonald; Cascante, Elizondo, Rojas; Hernandez (Jimenez), Grant, Ruiz, Chacon (Wally), Wanchope.

Guatemala: Gonzalez; Leon (R.), Melgar (A.); Valdez, Ovalle, Leon (L.); Melgar (N.), Fion (Roldan), Gamboa, Torres, Salamanca.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P.
Costa Rica	5	4	1	0	13	2	9
Guatemala	5	3	2	0	10	2	8
Dutch Antilles ...	5	2	1	2	9	12	5
Mexico	5	1	2	2	4	5	4
Trinidad	5	1	1	3	4	12	3
Jamaica	5	0	1	4	3	10	1

INTERNATIONAL

JANUARY 14

England (0) 0 — 75,000
Holland (0) 0

England: Banks; Newton, Cooper; Peters, Charlton (J.), Hunter; Lee (Mullery), Bell, Jones (Hurst), Charlton (B.), Moore (I.).

Holland: Van Beveren; Drost, Krol; Jansen, Israel, Eykenbroeck; Van Hanegem (Veermtra), Rijnders (Muhren), Cruyff, Van Dijk, Keizer.

(Ref.: Siebert/West Germany).

More Next Month

LODETTI of A.C. Milan.

England debutant Ian Moore "scores" but is given offside in the goal-less draw with Holland at Wembley. Goalkeeper Van Beveren and Francis Lee (centre) watch. (A)

WORLD CUP STAR
PIERINO PRATI (Italy)

George Best of Northern Ireland and Manchester United. (A)

was much talk of the competition being abandoned. But IFA officials had talks with the authorities here and will have more as the dates for the various rounds draw nearer. If all remains quiet in Northern Ireland—and there has been little trouble since August—then there is no reason why the games should not go on as planned.

Dates pencilled in are: first round ties on April 23-24 (with replays on April 27-28); semi-finals on May 5 (with replays on May 7). The final will, as usual, be a two-leg affair with the first leg in Belfast on May 19 and the return leg in Dublin on May 22.

Situation

The IFA were recently trapped in an ironic situation when several players, selected for the Northern Ireland-Wales amateur international at the Showgrounds, Ballymena, wrote and made it clear that they didn't want to play for their country on that day—they preferred to play for title-chasing Glentoran in the Oval game against old rivals Linfield.

The players were Tommy Morrow and Roy Coyle who, along with Billy

up the situation with the comment: "I think these amateur matches are a lot of nonsense. No one pays any attention to them. Amateur football is a thing of the past. This is the day of the professional."

The irony of the situation is, of course, that the IFA were without the services of George Best for the World Cup match in Moscow last year because Manchester United retained him for a League Cup game. At the time there was much talk of taking a stronger line with clubs who don't release Irish players for vital international fixtures—so you can see the position the row placed the IFA in.

Arguments

On the other hand, one is inclined to agree with George Eastham that the amateur internationals are no longer the crowd-puller they were. And it does seem unrealistic that the IFA should insist on taking away key players from clubs involved in a very close, and exciting, League battle.

Both sides have strong arguments. But the fans are entitled to some consideration and as more people are interested in the outcome of the League than the amateur games the IFA could have been less pig-headed in the matter. All it needed was a little thought!

More Money For Blaxnit Tourney

by

COLIN McALPIN

THE Blaxnit All-Ireland tournament, Europe's first major sponsored soccer competition, will have more money than ever before when the Cup semi finalists from the Irish League and League of Ireland meet in the opening round on April 23-24.

This was announced early in January when representatives of the IFA and FAI met in Dublin to discuss plans for the third annual staging of the popular knock-out trophy which will now be worth £3,000 (an additional £500 has been put in the kitty).

Since its introduction two seasons ago—Shamrock Rovers beat Crusaders in the first final and Coleraine beat Rovers in last term's final—the Blaxnit, sponsored by a Newtownard's hosiery firm owned by Harold Black, the chairman of Ards, has fired the imagination of fans and clubs alike.

For the fans it has provided some excellent soccer and for the clubs much-needed cash. With the extra money the sponsors have indicated that all the competing clubs will benefit.

At the start of the season, when Northern Ireland was embroiled in civil strife, there

McCullough, had written to the IFA before the team was selected asking not to be considered as they wanted to play for the Glens in the vital League fixture.

Glentoran boss Peter McParland felt the ignoring of the letters was a slight to his club: "It is an obvious slight to Glentoran and the players that their letters have been ignored. The selectors have simply said: 'To hell with Glentoran'."

Situation

And McParland wasn't the only boss to be angry at having key players taken from him at an important stage of the Championship race. Ards manager George Eastham, whose Castlereagh Park club was battling it out with the Glens at the time, summed

Spare a thought for poor Distillery who have more than their share of bad luck this trouble-torn season. Manager Jimmy McAlinden, who really hasn't had an opportunity of getting down to the serious business of football since the season started, reckons that his main concern this year will be to survive.

Postponed

Since August, Distillery have been hampered at every turn. Their ground was in the "no man's land" between the warring factions of Belfast, they lost a packet of money through postponed fixtures and then had some home games switched to other venues because the panic-stricken authorities feared that trouble would boil over if the Whites met such clubs as Linfield at Grosvenor Park.

In such an atmosphere of uncertainty it is not surprising that the Whites have not been able to concentrate on the winning of trophies. Says McAlinden: "If we can get through this season safely we will consider ourselves lucky."

By scoring 20 goals Vicente Pereda earned the title of "Campeon Goleador" for the 1969 tournament. Here he is seen together with his Toluca manager Nacho Trelles after the last game of the season.

'Striped Goats' triumph

report from STELLAN DANIELSSON

FOR the eighth time since 1957, Guadalajara are the Mexican league champions. With 45 points they tied the record for most points set by Veracruz 23 years ago. The last time Guadalajara won the championship was four years ago, and the intervening years have seen Toluca (2) and Cruz Azul on top. Always one of the contenders, Guadalajara didn't slacken this year either, and held their place at the top from start to finish.

Los Chivas Rayadas (the Striped Goats), as Guadalajara are also known, are Mexico's most popular team. In the middle '50s Guadalajara decided on not contracting any foreign players but instead to develop their own talent. Their initiative has paid off well with a number of championships and a constant position at the top of the table.

Depending almost entirely on their own products, it's big news when Guadalajara decide on contracting an outsider, i.e. someone not from the city of Guadalajara. But these occasions have been scarce and usually it is Guadalajara that provide other Mexican league sides with talent. As a matter of fact, every club in the Mexican First Division count on at least one player from Guadalajara.

By winning the league title, Guadalajara become champion of champions, which is the name given to the winner of the game between league champions and cup winners, and since Guadalajara have already won both of these honours, the game won't be necessary.

A game that will be necessary, though, is the one between Cruz Azul and Veracruz to decide the runner-up. Cruz Azul have a better goal average; but this is of no importance and a decisive game will be played shortly in the Aztec Stadium.

With most important league positions being decided before the last round of the season, the most interesting battle to be decided was that concerning the scoring title. With one game to go, Horacio Lopez Salgado of America, the leader for most of the season, and Vicente Pereda of Toluca were tied at 19 goals each.

Horacio's America drew 0-0 with Universidad, giving the big opportunity to Vicente.

But Toluca had anything but easy opponents in their last league game of the season as Cruz Azul came to visit. The game looked as if it would end with a draw, which would have been quite satisfactory for the cement mixers from Cruz Azul, but when only 15 minutes remained, Pereda got away from his opponent and from a narrow angle got off a powerful shot that was too much for Alatorre guarding the Cruz Azul goalmouth.

Goal number 20 for Pereda gave him his first scoring title.

Laguna from Torreon did not catch crosstown rivals Torreon despite a grand effort in the last couple of games. Last place does not, however, automatically relegate Laguna, because of the World Cup.

With the Jules Rimet Cup in mind, Mexican soccer officials wanted to give their national team good time to prepare themselves, and therefore this early end of the season.

Second thoughts, however, have made association members aware that a long lay-off from league competition may be of harm, even though it would give the selected players plenty of time to work together.

For this reason, an extra league championship will be contested starting on February 8 and just called Mexico '70 Championship. The bottom-placed team of this tournament will then play against Laguna to decide which team will play in the Second Division next year.

In the Mexico '70 Championship, the 16 First Division teams will be divided into two groups of eight teams each, with a play-off at the end of the season. The teams will be divided as follows: in one group the teams that ended the season odd number positions such as 1, 3, 5, etc., and in the other group the teams that came in on even number positions such as 2, 4, 6, etc.

1969 Mexican League Champions Guadalajara. Standing from left to right: Villalobos, Lopez, Valdivia, Chairez, Herrada. Kneeling from left to right are C. Calderon, Ponce, J. Valdivia, Onofre, Gomez, Villegas. Missing is regular goalie I. Calderon.

GREGORY TESSER interview

This month's subject

BILLY BONDS

Tremendous enthusiasm

WEST HAM'S swashbuckling, cockney full-back Billy Bonds has without question been one of the "Hammers'" few successes this season. His brand of fast attacking play has always shown tremendous potential, and this term, even in the face of his team's continual dismal performances, his own form has shown an immense improvement.

The "East Enders" have for some considerable time been noted for their Cavalier approach to the game, and although they have been unable to produce the consistency of Leeds United or Chelsea, there is no disputing their entertainment value.

This season life has turned sour at Upton Park. Players such as Geoff Hurst and Martin Peters have lost their form, and the "Hammers" have been struggling to hold their own. But the likeable Bonds is one West Ham performer who can look back on the 1969-70 season with pride. He is probably playing better now than at any time in his career.

I asked Billy whether he felt optimistic about the future at Upton Park: "I am completely convinced that if we continue to play the way we have been playing for several seasons, some success is bound to come.

"We must of course start planning for next season, and also at the same time try to improve on our lowly league position. Personally I am full of confidence for the future. We have some fine young players, and this should certainly help us build for the future with supreme confidence."

Bonds realises that West Ham have a squad of up-and-coming youngsters second to none in the Football League, but he quite rightly pointed out to me that they must be given time to acclimatise to the cut-throat world of the First Division.

"The pundits should always remember that players such as Clyde Best, Pat Holland and Jimmy Lindsay are all very young and inexperienced and have many years in which to mature. I fully believe that with so many talented youngsters coming along, we should do well next season."

Young Jimmy Lindsay has been tipped by many critics as a star of the future. I asked Bonds for his opinion of Lindsay's ability: "Jimmy is very strong. He has wonderful enthusiasm and never at any time gives up. His tackling is really remarkable for one so young. We have certainly improved since Lindsay came into the side.

"Another youngster who is gradually improving is Pat Holland. He has all the basic skills and should do very well in the years ahead."

West Ham's defence has been continually criticised by the National Press for its lack of dedication and consistency. However, the colourful Bonds is far from convinced that his side's rearguard is to blame for the poor form shown by the "Hammers" so far this season.

"I don't like criticising anyone for our inconsistency, but if I did have to fault anything in our play it would undoubtedly have to be our inability to take comparatively easy chances in front of goal. This lack of punch up front was clearly shown during the home fixtures with both Nottingham Forest and Everton. We should have easily picked up full points from both matches, but despite our superior territorial advantage we were never able to take complete command in front of goal, and after all it is goals that count!"

DEDICATED

In this day and age of success before everything else, fans are becoming more and more aware that your team is only worth supporting when there is something concrete to play for in either league or cup. But this maxim certainly does not apply to the dedicated West Ham faithful. The average gate this season at Upton Park has been 30,000, even though for much of the time skipper Bobby Moore's men have been fighting for their First Division life.

So why do the fans continue to flock to the Boleyn ground in such numbers? Billy Bonds is convinced he knows the answer.

"I fully realise that we have not been a success this season, but we are still able to average 30,000 for all our home games. This figure to my mind is a complete vindication of our brand of entertaining soccer. However, one should not close one's eyes to the fact that even the most devoted fans like to see some success on the field, and it is now up to us to prove just what we are capable of next season."

The essence of any side's success is confidence, and in Billy Bonds West Ham have a player with a complete belief not only in himself but also in his fellow players.

"I think the future at Upton Park is extremely bright. We have without doubt some of the finest players in the world today, and although people have been saying for a very long time that we are bound to click some time, I am convinced that the 1970-71 season will be one the West Ham players will not forget for a very, very long time.

"All we have to do is to be much more consistent, and work that much harder to achieve our goal of being the Number One side in England."

EIGHT TEAM LEAGUE IN 1970 IS THE FORECAST

Report from COLIN JOSE

AFTER weeks of negotiations, meetings and more meetings the North American Soccer League — which at one time appeared to be heading for substantial expansion — has for the time being settled for a six-team league just one more team than last season, however by kick-off time this may well have changed yet again.

The events leading up to the current composition of the league began at the league meeting in New York City on November 12 when the league's executive director, Phil Woosnam, said: "I do not foresee an expansion beyond an eight club league for 1970, unless the strength of the applicants gives us good reason to do so."

Afterwards Woosnam speaking at a press conference to announce the 1970 format said: "New York is likely to be the next city granted a franchise," and he indicated that an announcement on this question would be made in about two weeks, after discussions had been completed with the German-American League. At the same time it was announced that groups in Chicago, Philadelphia and Syracuse were working towards meeting NASL requirements.

In two weeks no further statements were forthcoming and the league meeting scheduled for December 1 was postponed until December 18.

Dependant

At this meeting it was decided to leave the question of the New York franchise until 1971, and accept into tentative membership the groups from Chicago and Philadelphia, Syracuse having withdrawn their application. The full membership of the groups from Chicago and Philadelphia was to be dependant upon their both raising performance bonds of $75,000. If one or the other failed this would cancel both memberships.

The Chicago group had the backing of George Fishwick Regional Director for the Mid West region of the USSFA's Development Committee and the Chicago National League, while the Philadelphia group were the Spartans members of the American Soccer League last season.

As it happened they both failed to come up with the bond and consequently the league remained at six team at that time. Since then problems have arisen over the posting of a bond by Kansas City that did not quite meet the league's requirements and for a while it was feared that the Kansas City club might withdraw, however this has now been solved.

The six clubs will operate in two divisions unless further additions are made to the membership, the Eastern Division to consist of the Atlanta Chiefs, Dallas Tornado and the Washington Darts while in the West Kansas City Spurs, Rochester Lancers and the St. Louis Stars will be in opposition.

For the present the schedule calls for 24 games for each team (26 was the figure given earlier) four of these to be against foreign opposition, the results to count in the standings. Teams from England, West Germany, Israel and either Mexico or Argentina are currently being talked of as providing the opposition with Queens Park Rangers, Crystal Palace and Coventry City being the English clubs mentioned along with Hertha (Berlin) and Hapoel (Tel-Aviv).

The winners of each section will play off for the title on the weekend of September 7 in a two-game total goal series. The schedule is due to open on April 19, with a break for the World Cup.

In other league news club owners are pressing for a lower league budget than the $160,000 outlined in the league's plans for 1970. The clubs would like to see this reduced to $120,000.

At one of the recent NASL meetings a group from Buffalo headed by a Mr. Wayne Cameron made a very good presentation for joining the league in 1971, while the Rochester Lancers recently announced the appointment of a coach for the coming season. He is Alex Petrolli who has been coaching local soccer in Canada in recent years.

Eligible

Four of the NASL teams will have at least one extra fixture in addition to their regular schedule for the USSFA has announced that for the first time clubs from the league will be allowed to enter the US Open Cup. Clubs not eligible are the Washington Darts and the Rochester Lancers both of whom joined the NASL too late to qualify.

Replying to questions on the North American Soccer League recently Phil Woosnam indicated that: "Our initial approach to soccer was like a bad dream," and added, "last winter the NASL got a kick in the teeth and we woke up."

"Previously," he said, "the emphasis was directed almost totally towards the professional game with indifferent attention paid to the growth of the game as a whole. The astronomical club budgets could only spell disaster and there was no justification for adopting such an expansive policy."

Woosnam feels that 1970 will probably go down in the record books as the year that soccer turned the corner in the United States, and told reporters that up to now "soccer has simply been undersold and badly sold."

Asked about the growth of soccer in recent years the former Welsh international stated: "Statistics prove that participation in soccer has more than doubled since 1966, the year before professional soccer. The increase in the high schools to 2,500 and in colleges to 500 is phenomenal." He emphasised: "Never before has there been a co-ordinated programme to promote this sport and yet there are well over 200,000 boys seven to 18 years of age playing in organised soccer. In the next two or three years, that will rise to one million.

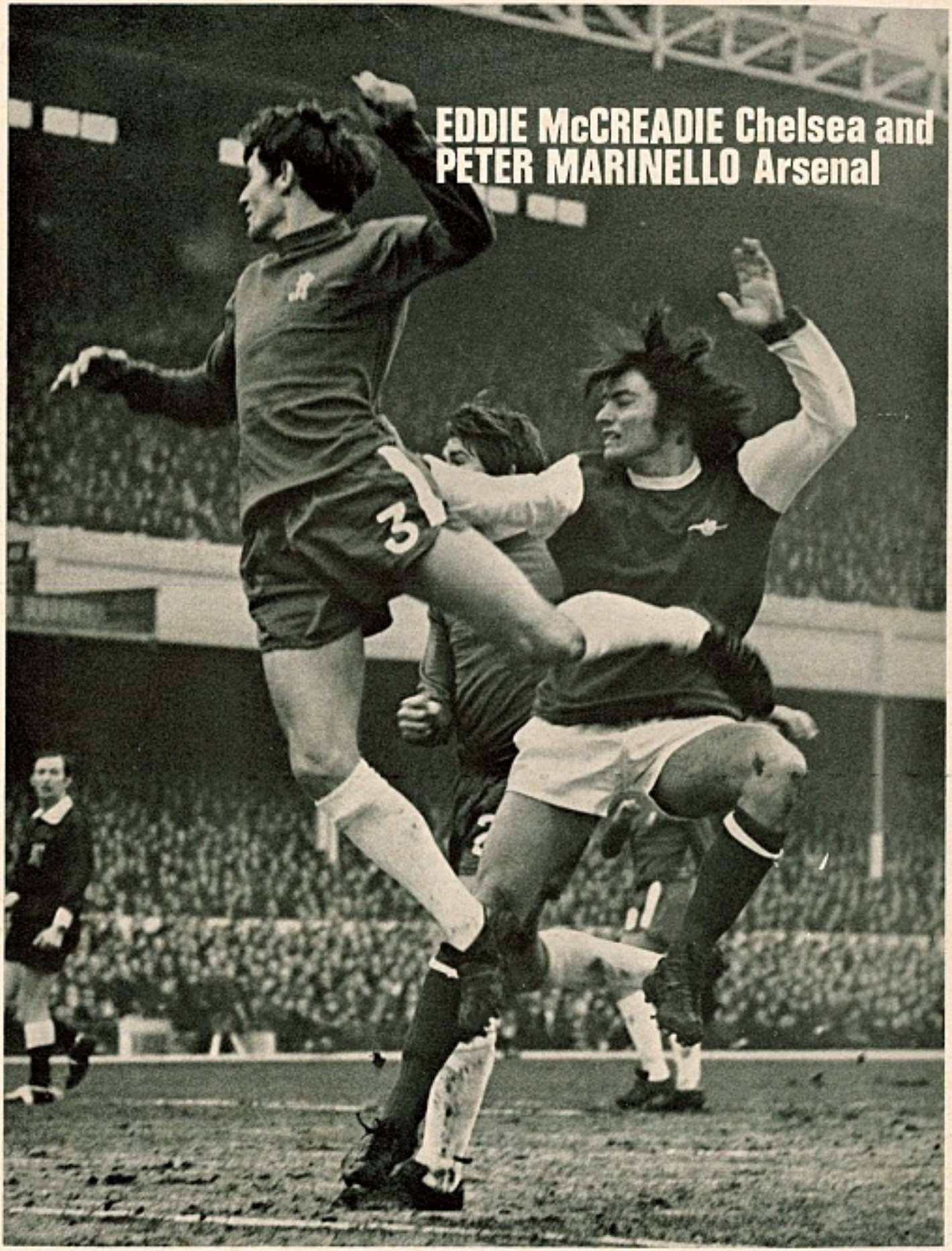
"Our experience has indicated that the middle and upper classes of America—professional people like educationists, doctors, attorneys, executives — have really taken to this sport."

On the college scene, St. Louis University of St. Louis, Missouri, won the National Collegiate Athletic Association Soccer Tournament in San Jose, California, defeating San Francisco University 4-0 in the final. The coach of St. Louis who are known as the "Billikens" is Harry Keough who played at right-back in the United States team who defeated England at Belo Horizonte in 1950.

Switching to Canada, referees in the province of Ontario want more money, and are asking for an increase of three dollars a game for minor matches bringing the fee to $10, and an increase to $50 from $35 for major games. Derek Smith, secretary of the Ontario Soccer Referees' Association called the fees now paid soccer officials "ridiculous". He said that there were six cases of referees being attacked by players during the season, one of them resulting in court action.

Mr. R. G. Hunka, planning and production director of television sports for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, told me recently that the CBC is currently negotiating for the television rights to the 1970 World Cup, but said: "At the moment it appears highly unlikely that we will be carrying any of the play downs leading up to the final. However, this is always subject to change as our negotiations proceed," he added.

Mr. Johnny Esaw, sports director for the other Canadian network, CTV, advises me that they have been in contact with FIFA over World Cup coverage since 1967, but so far nothing concrete has been arranged. CTV are, however, hoping to carry several games from Europe this spring.


EDDIE McCREADIE Chelsea and
PETER MARINELLO Arsenal